

# GREAT MASTERS OF INDIAN CINEMA

The Dadasaheb Phalke Award Winners



D.P.MISHRA











**Great Masters of Indian Cinema**

**THE DADASAHEB PHALKE  
AWARD WINNERS**

**D.P. MISHRA**



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Coal & Mines  
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Shastri Bhawan  
New Delhi-110 001

डॉ. दासरि नारायण राव  
DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO

## PREFACE


Indian Cinema has evolved in more than one ways over the last 100 years. It has now come to play an important role in our daily lives—mainly as a source of entertaining and occasionally, a soul stirring and thought provoking medium. Commercialization of this effective medium is the order of the day with all the attendant pitfalls. Industry has been facing several challenges and hopefully, shall overcome all of them with the passage of time.

Every field including the Cinema has its own ups and downs and highs and lows and the extraordinary and ordinary. Dadasaheb Phalke Award, starting with 1969 has emerged as the most widely acknowledged recognition of the contributions of distinguished persons to the growth and development of the film industry in several ways. This Award has indeed become an institution and is much sought after. Over the years this distinction has been conferred on actors, actresses, directors, producers, lyricists, composers and singers covering the broad spectrum that constitutes the industry. From Devika Rani to Adoor Gopalakrishnan, 35 distinguished persons from different languages and regions have been conferred the honour of the Dadasaheb Phalke Award. Dr D.P. Mishra has made an effort to capture the glimpses of their contributions in this book and it is an effort worthy of appreciation.


Analytical approach correlating the evolutionary social trends and their reflection in cinema of different times would have been more appropriate for the benefit of the readers. Maybe, this requires another special effort. This book presents a sketch of details of life of various awardees and the films they were associated with. To that extent this book can be a collector's item.

The author and the Publications Division of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, deserves appreciation for their initiative and efforts in bringing out this book.

NEW DELHI.  
08-02-2006.

  
(Dr. Dasari Narayana Rao)





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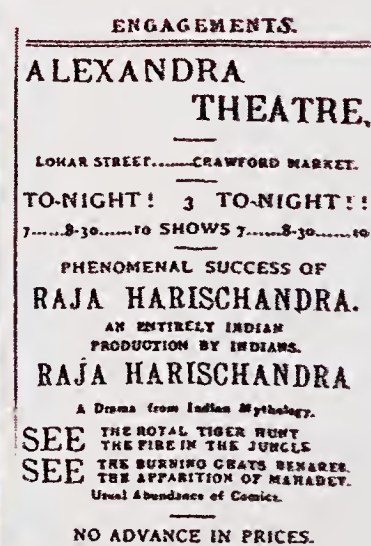








# DADASAHEB PHALKE



Dadasaheb Phalke's masterpieces :

*Clockwise from Top right: A still from Raja Harishchandra, 1917, silent. The film is hailed as 'entirely Indian production by Indians'; Phalke on the sets of Raja Harishchandra, dressing up his son; an advertisement of Raja Harishchandra; A still from Lanka Dahan, 1917, silent, one among Phalke's several mythologicals; A scene from Gangavataran, 1937, Marathi/Hindi. This grand mythological spectacle is Phalke's only sound film which was made when he was seventy.*

1870-1944



# DADASAHEB PHALKE

## Father of the Indian Feature Film

**D**HUNDIRAJ Govind Phalke popularly known as Dadasaheb Phalke was born on 30<sup>th</sup> April 1870 in Trimbakeshwar about 30 kms away from Nasik in Maharashtra. He was trained as a Sanskrit scholar. However, Dadasaheb's destiny took him to Bombay when his father joined the Wilson College as a professor.

Phalke had an inherent and keen interest in arts. He joined J.J. School of Arts, Bombay in 1885 for a course of drawing and continued his studies at Baroda's famous Kala Bhawan. After completing his studies in architecture there he became landscape painter. Photography and architecture honed his skills which proved immensely helpful in making him a successful film producer. In the initial phase of his career he worked as a photographer and scene painter for various drama companies. He also worked in a photography studio at Ratlam where he learned three-colour block-making and ceramics.

In 1903 he chanced to join the Archaeological Department as a photographer where he got exposure to the magic of cinema. Here he worked as a portrait photographer, stage make-up-man, assistant to a German illusionist and as a magician. Here only he secured the patronage of the persons for setting up an Art Printing press and his mentors in order to acquaint him with the latest printing process arranged his trip to Germany on the condition that he remained with the company. But by then Phalke had realised that a career in printing was not his forte.

Saraswatibai Phalke reminisces in Phalke Centenary Souvenir, 1970

*We both went to see the 'cinema' in an illuminated tent on Sandhurst road where a band was playing. It was called the America-India Cinematograph. The first class tickets were priced at eight annas. It was Christmas of 1911 and the hall was crowded with Christians and Europeans. The lights were then switched off and there appeared the picture of a cock moving on the screen. This was the trademark of the Pathe Company. Then a comic picture started featuring an actor called Foolshead. After every part of the film, the lights were switched on and stage items of magic or physical feats were performed. The main picture that day was on the life of Christ. People were weeping on seeing the sufferings of Christ and the crucifixion. The film was coloured in the Kinemacolour process. On the way back he said... "Like the life of Christ,*



*we shall make pictures about Rama and Krishna.” I was not at all happy to hear that and kept quiet.*

Long ago he had seen a movie on the life of Jesus Christ made by a foreigner in Watson hotel by Mr. Meris Sestiye-the representative of the pioneer of Cinema Industry -Lumiere Brothers. Its viewing and impact on the audience strongly oriented Phalke's mind towards cinema production. He was convinced that abundance of characters in Indian mythology would provide a fertile ground for the birth and tremendous growth of indigenous film-industry. All these factors inspired him for its experimentation in India.

Film making was a foreign phenomena in those days. Pledging his life insurance against the loan from his friend, he went to England in 1912 to purchase the necessary equipment and learn the technicalities required to make a film. Cecil Hepworth, the well established producer, proved an invaluable source and Phalke returned with a Williamson camera, developing and printing equipments, a perforating machine, and raw film stock.

After his return to India he made a film **Raja Harishchandra** based on the story of a king committed to honesty and for the its sake gives up his kingdom and family. The movie was released in Bombay in 1913. Dadasaheb's first silent movie 'Raja Harishchandra' had its official premier show in Coronation theatre in Bombay on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1913 for the common people. This film was made under the banner of Phalke Film Company. In 1917 Phalke Company became a partnership concern. **Raja Harishchandra** is the first indigenously made film. It was a creation of Phalke in its entirety. Everything was organized by him locally. He even distributed the film himself. **Raja Harishchandra** proved to be a box-office hit.

Phalke was the greatest pioneer of Indian cinema who established the basic norms of film making in almost every department of this conglomerate art. He was his own scenarist, cameraman, art-director, costume designer, editor, processor, painter, developer, projectionist and even distributor. This one man institution established motion picture as a form of entertainment, a medium of art and extension of Indian culture. Phalke introduced the first heroine to Indian cinema when there was a dearth of talented artists willing to work in cinema. Even stage artists were not inclined to work in cinema. No women, not even a dancing girl would agree to work in the film. So for the role of Taramati Salunke, an effeminate and delicate looking boy was selected. Later on he played the roles of both Rama and Seeta in **Lanka Dahan** and became the most popular actor and actress of the period.

Dadasaheb Phalke invested enormous sum of money he had earned back in the industry. People were skeptical about the future of this industry when he ventured into it but soon their doubts were put to rest. Thousands of people started earning their livelihood from it. In the initial phase no financial investment was forthcoming



nor was there willing manpower available for carrying out work. Intellectuals and educated people kept a distance from it. This art form was looked down upon and considered lower than drama.

After deep thinking and observation Phalke shifted his base to Nasik. In those days Nasik was a small city with a lot of open space. He got a vast stretch of land in the southern part of Nasik, where he decided to set up his studio. The head office, chemical laboratory were set up there. The shooting in those days, even of the interior of houses or mansions, used to be done in open air. Animals like peacock, rabbits, monkeys, deer required for the movies were kept in the yard. Surroundings of the studio were very scenic. It housed a library, reading rooms, body building, riding, fencing facilities, a zoo and accommodation for technicians and artists.

The father of Indian cinema made more than 100 films and 30 short films in 25 year span. **Raja Harishchandra** (1913), **Sri Krishna Janam** (1918), **Kalia Mardan** (1919), **Kans Vadh** (1920) **Sant Tukaram** (1921), **Bhakt Gora Kumbhar** (1923) were notable silent movies, which were produced and directed by him.

Dadasaheb Phalke remained the uncrowned king of the Indian filmdom for more than two decades. His reign ended with the advent of the first talkie **Alam Ara** in 1931. Gone were the days of silent movies.

Dadasaheb's last silent movie was **Setubandhan** (1932). Due to changing interests of the masses and extreme commercialized atmosphere in film world, Phalke nearly retired. In the year 1934 he was invited to direct a film (Hindi and Marathi) - **Gangavataran**. He produced **Gangavataran** (1937) but he had lost his magic. This was his first talkie and his last film. Dadasaheb's company was closed in 1932. It was owned by Shridhar Apte of Bombay. Ownership of the company premises remained with Apte even after its closure. The machinery was properly taken care of. Around 1935, Godavari Cinetone Ltd. was founded. This was the first limited company in the cinema industry. Godavari Cinetone Ltd. using the machinery of Dadasaheb Phalke made a movie **Sati Sulcohana** which was directed by Shinde, Dadasaheb's favourite student. The famous writer and poet V.V. Shirwadkar of Nasik played the role of Laxman. It collapsed at the box office and was the last film made by using Dadasaheb's machinery.

J.B.H. Wadia recalls:

*It was in 1917 that Dadasaheb Phalke's **Lanka Dahan** was released at the old West End Cinema at Girgaum, Bombay. A muscular male artiste, Salunke, revealing his developed biceps, played Sita and the tail of Hanuman was just a clearly visible rope. Even so, **Lanka Dahan** was a minor masterpiece of its time. The spectacle of Hanuman's figure becoming progressively diminutive as he flew higher and higher in the clouds and the burning of the city of Lanka*



*in tabletop photography were simply awe-inspiring. I remember that devout villagers from nearby Bombay had come in large numbers in their bullock carts to have the darshan of their beloved God, Lord Rama. Many stayed overnight in their improvised dwellings to see the film again the next day.*

In 1938, Indian Film industry celebrated its silver jubilee under the leadership of Sardar Chandulal Shah. and presidentship of Mr. Satyamoorthy. Dadasaheb was invited to the function but was not honoured the way he deserved. From among the crowd of common man Shantarambapu took him to the stage. On the concluding day Shantarambapu collected funds for the construction of a house for Dadasaheb Phalke from producers, directors and distributors and added a handsome donation from his own Prabhat films and sent it to Phalke. Mamasahab Shukla helped Dadasaheb build a small bungalow in Nasik which he lived for a short period and passed away at the age of 74 on February 16th 1944.

The famous Houdacha Bangla where Dadasaheb's establishment was founded is ragged to ground. The name late Dadasaheb Phalke Path exists there moving over the remains of the magnificent past.

In a fitting tribute to Dadasaheb Phalke - the father of Indian cinema on his birth centenary year 1969, a new National award named '**Dadasaheb Phalke Award**' was introduced. This award is given annually for distinguished contribution to the medium, its growth and promotion. Dadasaheb Phalke was a pioneer in many ways. A few examples are as follows:

- The boy named Salunke who acted as Taramati in **Raja Harishchandra** (1913) was introduced as first heroine by Dadasaheb Phalke.
- Phalke not only became first producer, but also first director, writer, cameraman, make-up man, editor, art director and cinetechician with his first film **Raja Harishchandra**. It was the first Indian feature film shown abroad: **Raja Harishchandra** was the first Indian film shown on a percentage basis in London in 1914.
- Dadasaheb Phalke was the first person who distributed his film himself. Kamala who acted as female artiste in **Bhasmasur Mohini** (1917) was introduced by Dadasaheb Phalke as heroine. Mandakini who acted as child artiste in **Kalia Mardan** (1919) was introduced by Dadasaheb Phalke.

## **Filmography:**

*Raja Harishchandra (1913), Mohini Bhasmasur (1917), Satyawati Savitri, Raja Harishchandra (revised revision), Lanka Dahan (1918), The Birth of Shri Krishna*



*Leela, (1920), Govardhan Dhari, Shani Prabhav, Tukaram, Vikram Satva Pariksha, Valmiki, Sati Sulochana (1921), Ahiravan Mahiravan Vadha, Ganesh Avthar, Haritalika, Pandav Vanvas, Rajarishi Ambarish, Sant Namdeo, Sant Sakubai, Satyanarayan, Shishupal Vadha (1922), Ashwatthama, Baruvahan, Buddha Dev, Gora Kumbhar, Guru Dronacharya, Jarasandha Vadha, Kanya Vikrayan Mahananda, Quarrel Game of Narada (1923), Datta Janma, Draupadi's Fate, Jayadratha Vadha, Municipal Election, Ram Ravan Yuddha, Shivaji's Escape from the Mughal Court at Agra, Sita Vanvas, Sund Upsund (1924), Anant Vrata, Chaturithicha Chanda, Hedmaba Bakasur Vadha, Kakasaheb Outwitted, Mahashivratra, Pandava Shodh, Samantak Mani, Sant Janabai, Sati Tara, Satyabhama, Shatmukha Ravana Vadha (1925), Balaji Nimbalkar, Bhakta Sudama, Daksha Yagna, Draupadi Vastra Haran, Hanuman Janma Madalsan, Kala Damayanti, Rukhmangada Mohini Rukhmini Harna (1927), Bhakta Damaji, Ghosh Yatra, Malhari Martand, Narad Sansar, Parshuram, Sati Pingala, Shri Krishna Shrishti, Sudarshan (1928), Chandrahasa, Kacha Devyani, Prabhavati, Sant Mirabai, Talking Pot, Vasantsena (1929), Jealous Co-wife, Kabir Kamal, Khuda Parasta, Sati Sarla, Sati Sulochana, Shri Subramanyam (1930), Amir Khan, Gold Birds, Mohabatt Ki Putli, Shatain Ka Shikar (1931), Setubandhan, Setu Bandha (Talkie) (1932), Gangavataran (Hindi/Marathi) (1937).*

# DADASAHEB PHALKE : SOME INTERESTING FACTS

- When Dadasheb Phalke was living in near retirement at Nasik, the Moving Picture Monthly had written to him, requesting a photo for a special issue to be dedicated to Dadasaheb Phalke. Phalke had written back: "The industry to which I gave birth has forgotten me, then why do you try to remember me? It is the nature of the world to forget, you may also do the same"
- In an article written in 1917 in which he looks back at the beginning of his film career and assesses his own potential, Phalke says:  
*"I was well up in all the arts and crafts that go to make a motion picture - drawing, painting, architecture, photography, drama, magic - I was fully convinced that it CAN be done!"*
- Phalke's wife Kaki Phalke, not only cooked for the entire unit but also processed film there. She even made bold to offer herself as an actress when Phalke was in dire financial straits. Her only conditions were that he play the hero and her name be left out of publicity.
- 'Raja Harishchandra', India's first feature film was released in May 1913 and ran for on unprecedented 23 days or six times the normal run of films. Said Phalke to the Indian Cinematograph Committee in 1927: "I established the Film Industry in India in 1912."
- The production problems were immense. In 1928, appearing before the Indian Cinematograph Committee Phalke spoke of his travails:  
*"I had to do everything. I had to teach acting. I had to write the scenarios, do the photography and projection too. Nobody knew anything in India about the Industry in 1911."*
- Phalke introduced the mythological to Indian cinema; he gave this popular form a new dimension with a sophisticated use of special effects, that was way ahead of its times and not easily matched even today.
- From his short film 'How Films are Prepared' Phalke was acutely aware that he was making history, and so kept careful documentation of the early days of cinema in India. He also wrote a series of articles to educate spectators on the process of filmmaking. Dadasaheb Phalke lived on to the ripe old age of 74, but many of his dreams remained unfulfilled. The film industry had grown in stature and its productions had gained in sophistication. But the man who had started it all spent his last years in poverty and oblivion, with only the memories of his pioneering days to give him comfort. A few years before he died he wrote:  
*"If I had not possessed the artistic and technical faculties required for filmmaking and if I had not the courage and daring, the film industry would never have been established in India in 1912."*



# THE DADASAHEB PHALKE AWARD

**N**AMED after the father of Indian Cinema, this is the most prestigious award in the field of Cinema in this country. It is given at the National Awards function annually, in recognition of significant contributions to the medium made over a lifetime by an individual. The first recipient was Devika Rani in 1969, for her unparalleled performance as an actress of early Indian Cinema and as a producer at the helm of Bombay Talkies, one of the pioneering companies of the Indian film Industry.





# DEVIKA RANI

## First Lady of the Indian Screen

**D**EVKA Rani was born on 30th March, 1908 at Waltair. Her mother was Leela Chaudhary (niece of Rabindranath Tagore).

Winning a scholarship at the Royal Academy of music, she went to England to pursue her career in music. Later on she took to textile designing and decor and studied architecture. She began her career as Textile designer with leading art studio in England.

She joined Himanshu Rai's production unit in 1928 and came to India as his assistant. During the shooting of **A throw of dice** on Indian location they fell in love with each other and were wedlocked. After marriage they proceeded to Germany on a honeymoon-cum-business trip where their film was being processed and distributed by UFA. This trip enriched her in many ways and she learnt minute details of film craft from world renowned technicians like Pabst and Eric Pommer.

Prior to his return to India to set up Bombay Talkies, Himanshu Rai made **Karma** (1933) both in Hindi and English. It was Rai's first talkie directed by J.L. Freer Hunt. Devika Rani (in the role of a Maharani) is in love with the prince of a neighbouring state (enacted by - Himanshu Rai). Their love lore is almost completely devastated in her zeal to reform feudal ways. Though it failed to attract much audience, it brought moderate laurels to Devika Rani for her looks, voice and diction. It also resulted in flooding in of many offers but they (Devika and Himanshu Rai) decided to return to India. Subsequently in the year 1934 Bombay Talkies was established.

Devika Rani starred in most of the early Bombay Talkies films all directed by the German Franz Osten. Her popularity helped establish the company's banner, and won her the popular sobriquet "The First lady of the Indian Screen".

During the making of the film **Jawani-ki-Hawa** (1935) -She elope with her hero of the film, Nazam-ul-Hussain. Himanshu found her and forgave her but the hero had to be replaced and this search ended with his laboratory assistant Ashok Kumar's commitment to enact the leading role. This pairing of Devika Rani and Ashok Kumar was very successful in the later films also.

In **Jawani-ki-Hawa** Devika Rani was the star attraction. Khorshed Minocher Homyi (renamed Saraswati Devi) composed the music while her sister Chandraprabha acted in the film. They were conservative Parsis. Many of their community members

surrounded the Imperial cinema in protest. This protest, rather than posing a problem provided a lot of publicity to the studio and the film.

- **Jeevan Naiya** (1936): Was the first successful film of Devika Rani with Ashok Kumar. Ashok Kumar was very reluctant to enact his role. But this film was a box office hit and he went on to become Indian Cinema's most enduring lead actor.
- **Achut Kanya** (1936): This film shot Devika Rani and Ashok Kumar to the brilliant firmament of Indian cinema. This was based on Niranyan Pall's story. *The level crossing*. It tells of the tragic love between an 'untouchable' girl and a Brahmin youth. In that period of political and social unrest it was a pertinent theme. The role of untouchable girl was played with such conviction and sensitivity by Devika Rani that million of viewers all over the country shed tears of sympathy for her.

The film gained credibility with the cameos of rural life and authenticity of the dialogue spoken in rural dialect. Speech pattern reflected the background. Saraswati Devi's music contributed a lot to its popularity. Songs were woven into the fabric of the story which according to a critic initiated "a line of plot construction that remains the set formula of our commercial cinema to this day". The director of the film Franz Osten, screened the film at the Gobble's Ministry of Propaganda in Berlin. Reportedly, it was well received by the Nazi leader, despite its theme which could hardly be said to uphold racial purity. The Times of India described her acting as:

"..... a performance never seen or equalled on the Indian screen. It is absolutely inspired.. a real gem of pure acting which places her at the head of Indian screen stars which Garbo herself could hardly surpass..."

Other films in which she acted were **Mamta**, **Mian Biwi**, **Jeevan Prabhat**, **Savitri** and **Vachan**. She did not act for any other company and her last role was in **Hamari Baat** opposite Jairaj.

Waheeda Rehman, writes in Illustrated Weekly of India :

*Before the fifties there was a social stigma attached to cinema, which was, by and large, condemned as not fit for even boys from good families, leave alone girls, though a Devika Rani or a Leela Chitnis may have been an exception to the rule. But when I entered the field, the industry had already gained respectability. I was lucky to have been given the opportunity to build up an image of 'dignity'. It is up to the star to make what she will of her image. In an industry where it's all show, naturally you cannot give an inch without their extracting a yard. As long as it's your talent they are drawing on, you have nothing to lose.*



Devika Rani and Ashok Kumar starred in Bombay Talkies' next four films, which reflected the same concern for contemporary social issues. In **Janam Bhoomi** (1936) an idealistic doctor moves from the city to help the rural poor. **Izzat** depicted an aboriginal tribe's struggle to preserve its way of life. **Jeevan Prabhat** (1937) once again focused on caste prejudice. **Savitri** (1937) was the only mythological the company produced. It was marked by its tasteful elegant presentation, costume and sets.

After a number of unsuccessful films, the studio bounced back with a box office hit **Kangan** (1939) introducing a new actress Leela Chitnis.

With Rai's death in 1940, the company's control passed on to Devika Rani. She appointed S. Mukherjee and Amiya Chakravorty as independent producers to oversee all future productions. Of the two, Mukherjee had a better instinct for audience appeal. He evolved a narrative technique and story formula which seldom failed to score at the box office. He produced a string of box office hits that included **Punar Milan** (1940) **Jhoola** (1941), **Naya Sansar** (1941) and **Kismet** (1943) which were to set new stereotypes and trends. **Naya Sansar** and **Kismet** were departures from mostly rural based love stories produced earlier by Bombay Talkies.

**Naya Sansar**, written by Khwaja Ahmad Abbas, an assistant editor in the reputed National Daily, the Bombay Chronicle, is about the fourth estate. Abbas also acted as a consultant to the publicity department of Bombay Talkies. Due to this close association with the press, the film had the authentic atmosphere of a busy newspaper office which is the centre stage. Ashok Kumar enacts a reporter of Sansar, the daily newspaper. Premchand is its frank and fearless editor. Asha (editor's ward) joins the newspaper and falls in love with Premchand oblivious of the editor's longing for her.

An underworld don appears on the scene and thereafter the paper buckles under his pressure. Puran starts his own paper **Naya Sansar** a single sheet. He is all in one in this enterprise. He edits, prints and hawks. The don tries to annihilate him but Puran manages to survive after minor injuries and further exposes the evil man to his fullest. According to one critic Puran's death in the car accident would have been more appropriate. This film has tremendous social relevance. It also established Abbas as a writer/film maker who later on made valuable contributions to Indian Cinema.

**Kismet**, a crime thriller depicts Ashok Kumar as a rogue who is deeply involved in criminal activities. Well packed film like this never fails to spin money and it happened with this film also. Its stunning success caused a cleavage in the Bombay Talkies with S. Mukherji leaving to form a new company Filmistan. The control of the studio passed through several hands until its closure in 1954,



when a Marwari businessman from Calcutta demolished it to make way for an Industrial estate.

In 1945, she quit films to marry the noted Russian painter, Dr. Svetoslav Roerich, and retired to his sprawling estate at Bangalore where she lived till her death in 1994. She associated herself with a number of cultural organizations and maintained her link with the film industry serving in the Censor Board for several years. She was an active member of the Sangeet Natak Academy, the Lalit Kala Academy, The Central Government Audio visual-Education Board, Handicraft Board and the Karnataka Chitrakala Parishad.

### Awards & Honours:

She was honoured with the Padmashree in 1958, Soviet Land Nehru Award, the Jubilee Medal of the Bulgarian People's Republic and a special medal from Smt. Indira Gandhi in 1981 instituted by the Indian Academy of Motion Picture, Art and Science in recognition of her contribution to Indian Motion Pictures.

It has already been stated that Devika Rani's beauty, grace and acting ability came in for high praise everywhere, but in London she was the toast of the press. Here are some of the tributes paid to her:

- *Without the slightest doubt, the leading actress (Devika Rani) is one of the greatest stars the talking films have yet produced (The Morning Post, London)*
- *Go and hear the English spoken by Miss Devika Rani. You will never hear a lovelier voice or diction or seen a lovelier face. Devika Rani has a singular beauty which will dazzle all London. (The Star, London).*
- *A new and fascinating personality, Devika Rani. (The Observer, London).*
- *Devika Rani is one of the most beautiful creatures who have ever illuminated a screen. Her English, acquired at Cheltenham College, is perfect. Her film technique, acquired with UFA, is graceful and flowing and she will certainly be heard of again (The Lady, London).*
- *There can be no opinions. She has a lyrical grace and charm that elevate this simple story into a thing of beauty. She is herself as beautiful as any woman who has ever appeared on the screen. (Birmingham Post).*
- *Devika Rani is just about the loveliest woman who has yet graced the world's screens. She is so lovely that she puts the stereotyped charms of Hollywood blondes completely in the shades (Daily Despatch, Manchester).*
- *Karma is notable for introducing to the screen a really exquisite star Devika Rani. I recommend you to go and see this new and different star. (Express & Star, Wolverhampton).*



The *Times of India* described Devika Rani's role as Kasturi, the untouchable girl, as 'a performance never seen or equalled on the Indian screen. It is absolutely inspired... a real gem of pure acting which places her at the head of India's screen stars, which Garbo herself could hardly surpass'. The stars had to sing their own songs and the music director, Saraswati Devi recalled to Raju Bharatan, 'It was a real problem bringing either Devika or Ashok in some kind of *sur*'. Take their famous duet from **Achhut Kanya**, '*Main ban ki chidia ban ke ban-ban dolu re*'. The song may have finally caught your fancy the way it unfolded on the screen, but only I know the problems I had keeping them simultaneously in tune!'

## **B.N. SIRCAR**

### **Patriarch of Indian Cinema**

**B**N. Sircar born in the family of Sir N.N. Sarkar, the advocate General of undivided Bengal though possessing an engineering degree ventured into the film domain as a producer and rose to the pedestal so high that he began to be called the 'Patriarch of Indian cinema'.

The initial phase of his career trajectory saw him in the role of a supervisor of the building of a cinema theatre and this supervision stirred his inner self so strongly that he went ahead to construct his own cinema Chitra now called Mitra which was inaugurated by Subhas Chandra Bose in December 1930. He built a second theatre in central Calcutta named New Theatre, where Hindi films were exclusively screened. Chitra remained reserved for Bengali films. In 1928-29, B.N. Sircar formed International film craft in partnership with friends Amar Mullick and P.N. Ray, who had been associated with the making of Himanshu Rai's **A throw of dice** (1929). The concern folded after the production of two silent films **Chorkanta** and **Chashar Meye**.

In 1931 Sircar brought a Tanar Sound system for a New Studio, got an American engineer to build it up and set up New Theatres. He also procured some of the country's most attractive talent: directors, writers, actors and musicians - Premkumar Atorthy, who had been an assistant for the legendary **The light of Asia**, directed New Theatre's first talkie **Dena Paona** in Bengali in 1931. He also made several Urdu Talkies for New Theatre, including Aga Hashr Kashmiri's original film script **Yahudi Ki Ladki** with a star cast which included Saigal, Gul Hamid, Nawab and Ratna Bai. The New theatres employed artists on the salary basis. The company had three fully equipped units and boasted of some of the best technicians and music hands.

Sircar endeavoured to exploit the rich heritage of Bengal and gave his production a distinct colour. He invited Tagore to direct a film version of his dance drama *Natir Piya* in 1932, a print of which survives at Santiniketan. And that seriousness of attention was duly noted by Wilford Denuing, the American engineer who had set up Sircar's studio. He had recorded his dismay at the prevailing film culture of Bombay and wrote in the American Cinematographer (June 1932), "Calcutta proved a complete surprise.. contrasting the rushing haphazard methods of Bombay. Here I was presented with what - has become the nucleus of a real production unit... well financed and



with an ambitious programme of producing pictures for India actually comparable to those of the independent Hollywood companies.

New Theatres' first success was **Chandidas** (1932) based on the life of the Vaishnava saint of the same name. It was remade as **Puran Bhakt** (1932) in Hindustani for the North Indian market, setting trend of bilingual and multilingual features. B.N. Sircar remained at the helm of the affairs of New Theatres for 24 years and produced more than 150 films in various languages including Bengali, Hindi and Tamil.

**Puran Bhagat, Yahudi Ki Ladki, Chandidas, Devdas, Dhoop Chaon, Mukti, Vidyapati, Street Singar, Badi Didi** and **President** were the notable Hindi versions of the bi-lingual which were also made in Bengali. **Bakul** (1955) was his last film.

New Theatres witnessed a phenomenal success, a string of high quality films under the tutelage of B.N. Sircar (1901-80). Works of Rabindranath Tagore, Bankimchandra Chatterjee and Saratchandra provided the basis for most of his films. Alongwith these popular novelists other writers were commissioned to write stories for films. Stories written by Sailajananda Mukhopadhyaya gave a number of New Theatres hits including **Deshar Mati** (1938). **Jiban Maran** (1939) and **Daktar** (1940). Benoy Chatterjee's stories of highly successful N.T. Films **Pratisruti** (1941), **Parichay** (1941) and **Wapas** (1943) deserve special mention. The New Theatres films fulfilled twin purpose of entertainment and dealing with a social or humanitarian theme.

Even after nearly five decades the magic of the New Theatre films remains alive. The name 'New Theatres' is an institution and like Rabindranath is the name with which Bengalis become familiar from childhood. New Theatres logo 'Elephant' became the synonym of quality.

B.N. Sircar's empire introduced personalities of the stature of P.C. Barua, Bimal Roy, Debaki Bose, Leela Desai, Phani Majumdar, Timir Baran, Umashashi, Nitin Bose, K.L. Saigal, Pankaj Mullick, Nemo, Sisir Kumar Bhaduri and Jamuna, all of whom later earned all India fame under the banner of New Theatres. Among his technical achievements were the bringing of sound to Calcutta for Bengali films, and the introduction of the playback system. With the galaxy of the persons of eminence in their respective fields. New Theatres films became the mirror of our minds and wonderfully combined aesthetic appeal with economic imperatives. Sircar holds record of film production in India, having produced 177 films under the New Theatres banner. The only other concern that came close to this figure was Chandulal Shah's Ranjit Movietone with 175 films.

In the course of a decade New Theatres produced some 30 films, with a Hindi and Bengali version for each. Then came the war and the hardships which it imposed on Calcutta, the centre of a vicious famine and the target of Japanese bombings from

the east. The wreckage which ensued never allowed New Theatres to revive itself and it passed into history. But the films it produced live on.

## Awards & Honours:

B.N. Sircar held various responsible positions in several important film bodies set up by the Government as well as the industry. He was successive President of the BMPA, President of Film Federation of India, member of Central Film Censor Board, Chairman of Film consultative Committee set up by West Bengal Government, member of Joint Advisory committee of film and TV institute and National Film Archive of India. A founder member of Children's Film Society, Sircar was also associated with the Government's Film Enquiry committee in 1949 and honoured with Dadasaheb Phalke Award in 1970 and conferred Padmabhushan in 1971 by Government of India.

## Filmography:

**Silent :** *ChorKanta, Chashar Meye, Buker Bojha (1931), Talkies :* *Dena Paona (Bengali) (1931), Josh-E-Mohabbat, Mohabat Ke Ansu, Subah Ka Sitara, Zinda Laash, Natir Puja (Bengali), Chandidas (Bengali) (1932), Puran Bhagat, Rajrani Meera, Yahudi Ki Ladki, Devdas, Kapalkundala (Bengali) (1933), Chandidas, Daku Mansoor, Rooplekha (1934), After The Earthquake, Dhoop Chhaon, Karwan-E-Hayat (1935), Manzil, Maya, Millionaire (1936), Anath Ashram, Mukti, President, Vidyapati (1937), Abhagin, Adhikar, Dharti Mata, Street Singer, Adhikar (Bengali) (1938), Badi Didi, Dushman, Jawani Ki Reet, Kapalkundala, Sapera, Rajat Jayanti (Bengali), Jiban Maran (Bengali) (1939), Haar Jeet, Nartaki, Zindagi, Daktar (Bengali) (1940), Doctor, Lagan (1941), Meenakshi, Saugandh (1942), Kashinath, Wapas (1943), Humrahi, Wasiyatnama, Dui Purush (Bengali) (1945), Anjangarh, Oonch Neech (1948), Chota Bhai, Manzoor (1949), Pahela Aadmi, Roop Kahani (1950), Yatrik (1952), Naya Safar, (1953), Bakul (1955).*



# PRITHVIRAJ KAPOOR

## Charismatic Pathan from Peshawar

“There is no place in the films for uncouth brawny Pathans who think they can make it as actors”.

**T**HIS is an observation made by Baburao Patel, Editor and Publisher of the top Cinema magazine of the 30's, 40's and 50's, *Film India*, about Prithviraj Kapoor. Prithviraj in his reply to *Film India*, said “Baburao, do not provoke this Pathan. If there is no place for me in the Indian Films I shall swim across the seven seas to Hollywood and make it there as an actor”. Prithviraj did not need to go to Hollywood. That is History.

Conservative is not the ideal term for the environment in which Prithviraj sprouted. In the early part of this century, Peshawar city, in the northern Frontier Province of India, was a cantonment area which housed the British army. It abounded with a happy mixture of Hindu and Muslim Pathans who had migrated from Kabul, Capital of the neighbourly State of Afghanistan. From this soil to emerge into the field of fine arts was an act of heroic imagination.

Prithviraj Kapoor the patriarch of Kapoor family was born in middle class landlord family of Punjab's Lyallpur town (now in Pakistan) on 3rd November 1906. After schooling from Lyallpur, he got admission in Advert college in Peshawar where he carved out a niche for himself as an actor. He got married at 18 which impeded his law studies and consequently he started chasing his cherished dream of acting. In 1928 winter, leaving behind his wife and children with his aunt he left for Bombay. His aunt gave him financial assistance at this stage. In Bombay he joined Imperial Film Company in 1929 in the Era of silent films. Here he joined B.P. Mishra and worked in his bold films like **Cinema girl**. In 1931 he acted in first talkie film **Alam Ara** in a lead role. After this he joined Grant Anderson Theatre company and played the role of Lacartes in Shakespeare's drama Hamlet.

His joining Calcutta's New Theatre in 1931 proved to be a milestone in his career. Here he acted in Debki Bose's **Seeta** (1934) and **Rajrani Meera** (1933) in Hindi versions. Durga Das Banerjee played the same role in their Bengali versions.

Prithviraj Kapoor has intimately been associated with best films of the New Theatre such as **Manzil** in 1936, **President** in 1937, and **Vidyapati** in 1937. In **Vidyapati** he enacted the role of King Shivasingha whose wife falls in love with the



legendary poet Vidyapati. Chandulal Shah of Ranjeet Movietone took his services. His best movie under this banner was **Paagal** in the year 1940 in which he enacts a psychiatrist. This was the most popular film of the year.

Story of this film runs like this: Prithviraj is a psychiatrist in the asylum. Tricked into marrying the less beautiful of two sisters, he injects the one he wanted to marry with a drug that renders her insane. He then keeps her in the asylum where he brutalizes her. It was a dark role unlike any other role he had played before.

Persona of Prithviraj Kapoor was immortalized with his role of **Sikandar** in 1941. This epic film was set in 326 BC where Alexander the Great having conquered Persia and the Kabul Valley descends to the Indian border and encounters Porus (Modi) who stops the advance with his troupes. Sikander's lavish mounting, huge sets and production values equals the best of Hollywood's at that time particularly for its spectacular battle.

Prithviraj had a natural leaning towards historical events and subsequently **Mughal-e-Azam** was produced where he enacted the role of Akbar. His keen sensibility towards historical events is properly reflected in his performance. Though he played positive roles in social films, he is acclaimed for his films set in historical background. His collaboration with V. Shantaram in socially relevant films had been very successful.

However, Prithviraj Kapoor could never shake off his attraction for the stage, even when he was very successful in films. He formed Prithvi Theatres at a time when the Hindi drama world was in the doldrums, and toured all over the country with his play **Paisa, Shakuntala, Pathan, Ahooti, and Kalakar**. Prithvi Theatre provided contemporary actors a platform to express their talent. Prominent among those were Mumtaz, Zohra Saigal, Premnath, Rajender Nath, Mohan Segal, L.V. Prasad, Raj Kapoor, Shammi Kapoor and Shashi Kapoor.

His son Raj Kapoor received his early training in acting in Prithvi Theaters, as did many other artists who gained fame later.

Prithviraj took the rather unfortunate step of producing a film on his screenplay *Paisa*. It was a disaster. However, Raj Kapoor came forward to bail him out of the very difficult situation.

His major film works in the 1950s include V. Shantaram's **Dahej** (1950), and his son Raj Kapoor's **Awaara** (1951). The later starring Prithviraj and Raj as father and son was perhaps Raj Kapoor's finest film. The dramatic confrontations between Prithviraj and Raj were the highlight of the film. The film and particularly the title song (Awaara Hoon) swept through Asia breaking box office records in the middle east and was dubbed in Turkish, Persian and Arabic. The film also



swept Russia where it was called Bradyaga (Vagabond). Interestingly K.N. Singh, the villain of the film did his own dubbing in Russian. Raj Kapoor and Nargis became superstars in Russia.

**Aasmaan Mahal** (1965) saw another memorable performance from Prithviraj as an old Nawab who refuses the wealth offered by capitalists who want to turn his dilapidated mansion into a hotel. The film which suggests that the old feudal order must be allowed to fade away with dignity while its descendants take the cue from 'the people' rather than from entrepreneurs, won Prithviraj laurels at International Film Festival.

Among his later films **Teen Bahuraniyaan** (1968) saw him as the loveable head of the family trying to knock sense into his giddy headed daughters-in-law enamoured by a film star staying next door and **Kal Aaj Aur Kal** (1971) directed by grandson Randhir Kapoor (son of Raj Kapoor) saw him play the role of a family head dealing with the son caught in between both. Interestingly, Prithviraj Kapoor, Raj Kapoor and Randheer Kapor enacted lead roles. By now, however, his health deteriorated and he completed the dubbing from his hospital bed. He had also played the patriarchal head in the Punjabi film **Nanak Naam Jahaaz hai** (1969). It was the first major successful Punjabi film in post independent India with a major cultural impact on Punjabi Sikhs at home and abroad and is credited with the revival of Punjabi film industry in India.

## Awards & Honours:

First nominated film member of Rajya Sabha for eight years. He was a fellow of Sangeet Natak Academy. He was awarded Padmabhushan by the President in 1969. He received BFJA award for **Devdasi** (Hindi) in 1945 and was conferred Dadasaheb Phalke Award in 1971.

## Filmography:

*Alam Ara, Draupadi, 1931, Dagabaz Ashiq, 1933, Rajrani Meera, 1933, Daku Mansoor, Ramayana, Seeta, 1934, After the Earthquake, Blood Feud, Swarg Ki Sidhi, 1935, Manzil, 1936, President, Anath Ashram, Vidyapati, Milap, 1937, Abhagin, 1938, Adhuri Kahani, Dushman, Sapera, 1939, Chingari, Deepak, Pagal, Aaj Ka Hindustan, Sajani, 1940, Sikandar, Rajnartaki, 1941, Ek Raat, Ujala, 1942, Ankh Ki Sharm, Bhalai, Gauri, Ishara, 1943, Maharathi Karna, 1944, Devdasi, Nala Damyanti, Shri Krishna Yudh, Vikramaditya, 1945, Valmiki, Prithviraj Samyukta, 1946, Parshuram, 1947, Azadi Ki Raah Par, 1948, Dahej, Hindustan, Humrahi, 1950, Awara, Deepak, 1951, Anandmath, Chhatrapati Shivaji, Insaan, 1952, Aag Ka Dariya, 1953, Ehsan, 1954, Paisa, Pardesi, 1957, Lajwanti, 1958, Mughal-E-Azam,*

*1960, Senapati, 1961, Harishchandra Taramati, Pyar Kiya To Darna Kya, Rustom Sohrab, 1963, Jahan Ara, Gazal, Rajkumar, Zindagi, 1964, Aasmaan Mahal, Jahan Sati Wahan Bhagwan, Janwar, Khakaan, Lootera, Shri Ram Bharat Milap, Sikandar-E-Azam, 1965, Daku Mangal Singh, Insaaf, Lal Bangla, Love & Murder, Shankar Khan, Sher, Afghan, Ye Raat Phir Na Ayegi, 1966, Shamsheer, 1967, Teen Bahuraniyan, Balram Shri Krishna, 1968, Insaaf Ka Mandir, Sati Sulochana, Nayi Zindagi, 1969, Ek Nanhi Munni Ladki Thi, Gunah Aur Kanoon, Heer Ranjha, 1970, Padosi, Sher-E-Watan, Kal Aaaj Aur Kal, 1971, Bankelal, Naag Panchami, 1971, Bombay By Night, 1979.*



# PANKAJ MULLICK

## Musical Genius

**P**ANKAJ Mullick was born in Calcutta in a middle class family. His father, interested in traditional music, used to invite eminent singers and instrumentalists to perform on religious occasions and this instilled a sense of music in Pankaj Mullick. In his early childhood itself he had chosen music as his future profession-to-be. He got opportunity to learn and get trained under the tutelage of Durgadas Banerjee and Rabindranath Tagore. He left his studies in the midst to pursue his long cherished love for music.

Pankaj Mullick's introduction to Tagore family proved very beneficial and had everlasting influence upon him. Rabindra Sangeet became his passion and he tuned a Rabindranath poem, Diner Seshey, Ghoomer Deshey to music with the great poet's total approval. The approval was attained after endless hours of waiting on him. Pankaj approached Rabindranath Tagore to seek his permission to perform one of his poetries. Rabindranath Tagore asked him to sing the composition and on being overwhelmed by the tunes permitted him to go ahead with all his poems. It was through Pankaj Mulluck's effort which popularised Rabindra Sangeet in Bengal and elsewhere.

In his early career-formation years he worked with the Indian Railways but his goal never left his mind.

Panjak Mullick was intimately related to AIR since its inception in 1928 then known as Indian Broadcasting Company. For many years his Sunday music lessons had thousands of listeners, especially among the girls. He initiated the use of Tabla as accompaniment to keep rhythm for Rabindra Sangeet.

He appeared in silent films. In his first silent film **Chashar Meye** (1934) he conducted his orchestra to provide background music. Other films in which he acted are **Mukti** (1937), **Adhikar** (1938), **Kapalkundala** (1839), **Arohi** (1940), **Nartaki** (1941) and **Doctor** (1941).

Panjak Mullick first joined Calcutta's New Theatres where he trained and conducted rehearsals for artists like K.C. Dey and Saigal. He got his first break with **Yahudi Ki Ladki** (1933). Pankaj shared the credits with R.C. Boral. Later he worked with R.C. Boral for **Devdas** (1935). Their other hits are Barua's **Maya**

and **Grihdah** (1936). Hem Chandra's **Karodpati** (1936) and Nitin Bose's **President** (1937).

Pankaj Mullick and Raichand Boral supplemented each other on many occasions whilst composing music for New Theatre's film. Later on Mullick got his first opportunity as an independent music director in P.C. Barua's **Mukti** (1937). It had Mullick's composition for Tagore's poem '**Diner Sheshe Ghoomer Deshey**' which became a big hit.

K.L. Saigal's Bengali hit song owe their existence to Pankaj Mullick, who persuaded the singer to bring down the pitch of his singing. Earlier he would sing with a high pitched voice. He trained Kanan Devi to understand and get the feel of Rabindra Sangeet.

In 1944, Pankaj Mullick composed and even sang '*Do Naina Matware Tihare*' and '*Chupo Na Chupo Na*' for Chunder's **Meri Behen**. The songs became instant hits. He gave many of Saigal's best songs; including '*Soja Rajkumari*' and '*Main Kya Jaanoo Kya*'.

Pankaj Mullick continued with his singing lessons on AIR for four decades, and after he retired in 1975, the then Chief Minister of West Bengal Dr. B.C. Roy appointed him as Advisor to the Folk Entertainment section of the Government's publicity department. Towards the end of his career, he came to Bombay to compose music for **Kasturi** by Gyan Mukerji.

Once when Saigal came to Pankaj Mullick's room to sing the classical number "Karoona kya aas niraas Bhaye" he was totally drunk. Saigal tried singing but just couldn't get it right even after 15 takes. Pankaj Mullick was so furious that he slapped Saigal who started crying like a child repeating. "You hit me, you hit me". To which Pankaj Mullick replied "of course, I did, you call yourself a singer and can't sing even one line straight". Saigal felt so humiliated that he sang the song with such a vengeance that it was immediately okayed.

## Awards & Honours :

He was recipient of several honours and awards, Sangeet Ratnakar (1956), Padmashree (1970), Rabindra Tagore Charya (1975), and BFJA Awards: Best Music director for **Dui Purush** (Bengali: 1945). In 1973 he was honoured with Dadasaheb Phalke award for the year 1972.

Music maestro Pankaj Mullick passed away in the year 1978. His music composition held a unique position right from the early thirties to the present day, maintaining popularity among both young and the old. Pankaj Mullick also brought the concept of the 'tong song' to the silver screen for the first time with the immortal '*Piya Milan Ko Jaana*'. He authored four books on music, which illustrated the



correct structure of *Raagas*, the rules and canons of Indian classical music. His music emanates from gramophone, percolates deep into the hearts of the listeners, traverses to their lips and gets firmly ingrained into their psyche.

### Best of Pankaj Mullick:

Song	Film
Hum chale watan	Kashinath
Lo shuru hui	Kashinath
Aye qatib-e-taqdeer	My Sister
Do·naina matware	My Sister
Bhool hui kya meri	Kasturi
Mehki kahan kasturi	Kasturi

### Filmography:

#### As a composer (Hindi)

*Yahudi Ki Ladki (1933), Dhoop Chhaon (1935), Manzil, Millionaire (1936), Mukti, President (1937), Dharti Mata, Adhikar (1938), Badi Didi, Dushman, Kapalkundala (1939), Nartaki, Zindagi, Arohi (1940), Doctor (1941), Meenakshi (1942), Kashinath (1943), Meri Bahen (1944), Oonch Neech (1948), Chhota Bhai, Manzoor (1949), Roop Kahani (1950), Chhoti Maa, Yatrik, Zalzala (1952), Naya Safar (1953), Chitrangada, Kasturi (1954), Amar Saigal (1955).*

#### As an Actor

*Chashar Meye (1934), Mukti (1937), Adhikar (1938), Kapalkundala (1939), Nartaki, Doctor (1941).*

# SULOCHANA (RUBY MYERS)

## Self Styled Star

**T**HE self-christened Sulochana was among the early Eurasian female stars of Indian cinema. Born in Pune, the pretty brown eyed girl was former telephone operator before stepping into the vortex of films. She was spotted by director M. Bhavnani. He cast her in the lead in **Veer Bala** (silent) in 1925 and though she was originally credited as Miss Ruby, Bhavnani gave her the screen name of Sulochana, and it was as Sulochana that she became India's first great music movie star. **Madhuri** was her first talkie in 1932.

Ironically when Sulochana's home company Imperial launched the first genuine talkie film **Alam Ara** in 1931, it was Sulochana's rival Zubieda who was chosen to play the heroine because of her command over Hindi. Hurt but determined she took a year off to learn the language and made an ego affirming comeback with the record breaking hit, the talkie version of **Madhuri**, Sulochana reclaimed her position at the top of the heap. With her strong fan base Sulochana could dictate terms to her handsome Parsi co-star. D. Billimoria.

Her major films were **Cinema queen** (1926), **Typist Girl** (1926), **Wildcat of Bombay** (1927), **Anarkali** (1928), **Heer Ranjha** (1929)

Three romantic super-hits in 1928-29 with director R.S. Chaudhari - **Madhuri** (1928), **Anarkali** (1928), and **Indira B.A.** (1929) saw her at her peak of fame in the silent film era. In fact her fame was so widespread that when a short film on Mahatma Gandhi inaugurating a Khadi exhibition was shown, it was accompanied by a hugely popular dance of Sulochana from **Madhuri** synchronized with sound effects.

With the advent of sound Sulochana experienced a sag in her career but she could recover soon. One of the very few leading heroines of the silent era, Sulochana was the highest paid screen artiste at a time when the best male artiste received only a three figure salary. Her acting career spanned over more than 22 years from 1925 to 1947. This period gave the Indian moviegoers a unique image of a screen star.

B.D. Garga in *Genres of Indian Cinema* reveals:

*"The Twenties were by our present standards rather a liberal period. Kissing was common on the Indian screen, whatever the genre of films. Sulochana and*



*Dinshaw Billimoria would be seen in a tight embrace in films like Anarkali and Heer Ranjha. Sulochana could rightly be called the Indian screen's first sex-symbol, the girl all men would want to love. Her position and popularity were unrivalled by any other actress of her time. She was showered with gifts and souvenirs and besieged with frantic pleas ranging from autographs to matrimony. Her name shone in the brightest of lights on theatre fronts and the boldest types in newspaper advertisements.*

**Wildcat of Bombay, Telephone girl, Typist girl, Heer Ranjha, Punjab Mail, Madhuri, Anarkali, Indira B.A.** were notable silent movies and **Madhuri** (remake). **Indira M.A.** (remake), **Anarkali** (remake), **Pujarini, Bombay Ki Billi, Ankh Micholi** were notable talkie movies in which she acted. Later on she started playing character roles.

Sulochana stood tall in Indian screen - comparable with Marlene Dietrich and Greta Garbo. After **Kohinoor** she joined Imperial film Co. and made 37 films under the banner. She was one of those films stars who stepped from silent to talkie era and scaled even greater heights of popularity. But with the dwindling of Imperial's fortune, Sulochana receded into background and gradually spun out of the movie vortex.

She made a grand comeback with the talkie version of **Madhuri** (1932).

Further talkie versions of her silent hits followed and with Indira now an M.A. (1934). **Anarkali** (1935) and **Bombay Ki Billi** (1936) Sulochana had a grand comeback with one of the biggest heroes of the silent era, D. Billimoria as her lover. She worked exclusively between 1933 and 1939. They were an extremely popular pair - his John Barrymore style opposite her Oriental Queen of Romance image.

With the termination of their love story they faced reversal of fortunes. Sulochana left Imperial to find new offers forthcoming. Newer, younger and more proficient actresses had entered the scene. She tried to make a comeback with character roles but even these were far and few in between.

However, she still could excite controversy. Morarji Desai banned the Dilip Kumar-Noorjahan starrer **Jugnu**, because it reportedly showed a morally reprehensible act as an aging fellow professor falling for Sulochana's vintage charms.

In 1953, she acted in her third **Anarkali**, but this time in a supporting role as Salim's mother. Sulochana passed away lonely and forgotten in 1983 in her flat in Mumbai.

About the trevails of that period Gohar tells Girish Karnad in Cinema Vision:

*The coming of sound hit some actors very hard. I was lucky-I spoke Urdu well. when I was young, a Mulla used to come to our house to teach me the Koran Sharif. He also taught a little bit of Persian but many others suffered. Madhuri*



*just faded away. Even Sulochana. I used to tell her, 'Madhuri at least is an Anglo-Indian, who speaks English at home, but you speak Hindustani, why don't you polish it up? I suppose she felt she didn't need to. It was sad... My last film was **Achut** in 1939. After that I decided to quit. The whole aspect of the industry was changing. I felt unhappy with it. I decided I should leave while I was still at the top—before they threw me out!*

## **Filmography:**

*Veer Bala (1925), Cinema Ni Rani (1925), Telephone Ni Taruni (1926), Wildcat of Bombay (1927), Gamedeni Gori (1927), Balidan (1927), Madhuri (1928), Punjab Mail (1929), Indira B.A. (1929), Heer Ranjha (1929), Khuda Ki Shaan (1931), Madhuri (1932)... Gul Sanobar Sulochana (1933), Piya Pyare (1934), Piya Pyare (1934), Indira M.A. (1934), Do Ghadi Ki Mauj (1935), Anarkali (1935), Bambay Ki Billi (1936), Shahjehan (1946), Jag Biti (1946), Jugnu (1947), Shair (1949), Paras (1949), The Jungle (1952), Apni Izzat (1952), Baaz (1953), aka married woman, Anarkali (1953), Suhagan (1954) Shart (1954), Nagin (1954), Lakeeren (1954), Gawaiya (1954), Aurat Teri Yehi Kahani (1954), Bindiya (1955), Parivar (1956), Ram Laxman (1957), Lal Batti (1957), Johny Walker (1957), Girl's College Facilitator, Kaagaz ke Phool (1959) ..aka Paper Flowers, Head Nurse, Anari (1959), (As Sulochana Sr.), Rita's Mother, Dil Apna Aur Preet Parai (1960), Mrs. Pinto, April Fool (1964), (as Sulochana Sr.), Teen Devian (1965), Khandaan (1965)... aka Aristocratic Family, Dean of the Girl College, Anupama (1966), Neel Kamal (1968), Beti (1969)... Mrs. Anand, Lakhon Mein Ek (1971), Wafa (1972).. Mrs. Thakur, Mrs. Verma, Aap Ki Kasam (1974), (as Ruby Sulochana)... Girl's hostel superintendent, Aakraman (1975), Dostana (1980) (as Ruby Myers) ... Nun.*





# DEVIKA RANI



*Top (left) in Achut Kanya, 1936, Hindi; Top (right) in Karma, 1933, Hindi;  
(Above) with Najam in Jawani Ki Hawa, 1935, Hindi*

1969



# B.N. SIRCAR



Films directed by B.N. Sircar:

*Above (left) K.L. Saigal and Umasashi in Chandidas ,1932, Bengali;*

*Above (right) K.L. Saigal and Yamuna Barua in Devdas, 1933, Hindi*

# 1970



# PRITHVIRAJ KAPOOR

## 1971



*Top (left) Prithviraj Kapoor with Smt. Indira Gandhi; Above (left) in Natarang Prathishtan's Pathan 1949, Hindi; Above(right) with Dilip Kumar in the blockbuster Mughle-e-Azam, 1960, Hindi*



# PANKAJ MULLICK



*Above (left) in Doctor, 1941, Hindi; Above (right) with Kamla Kumari  
in Kapal Kundala, 1939, Hindi*

1972



# SULOCHANA



*Above (left) with Raja Sandow in Indira MA, 1934, Hindi; Above (right) with Jamshedji in Wild Cat of Bombay, 1960, Hindi*

1973





# B.N. REDDI



Films directed by B.N. Reddy:  
*Above (left) Swargaseema, 1945, Telugu; Above (right)*  
*Devatha, 1941, Telugu*

1974





# DHIREN GANGULY

*(Above) a still from Bidrohee, 1935, Hindi, directed by Dhiren Ganguly*

1975





# KANAN DEVI

*(Top) with K.L.Saigal in Parichay/Lagan, 1941, Bengali/Hindi;  
(Centre) in Vidyapati 1937, Hindi; (Above) in her heydays*

1976



## B.N. REDDI

### Harbinger of the Golden age in Telugu Cinema

**S**OMETIMES your inner callings do not coincide with your parental aspirations. Family dictates try to shape your future in such a way as to enable your unfulfilled dreams become a reality. But whenever ambience provides an opportunity, one is overwhelmed by his inner callings and takes a new course of action in one's life and it is almost always for the better blooming.

Bommireddi Narasimhareddi popularly known as B.N. Reddi was born on November 16, 1908 in Kotta Palli in Andhra Pradesh. Contrary to his wish to join Santiniketan, he was made to stay in Madras and prepare for C.A. examination - and incidentally he became a Chartered Accountant.

He entered the film arena by joining H.M. Reddy. H.M. Reddy persuaded B.N's father to invest and complete a social film **Grihlaxmi**. But B.N. Reddi left H.M. Reddy due to some differences and formed his own Vihini Studio which was reputed as one of the biggest and the best equipped studios east of Suez. B.N. Reddi promoted cinema with a social purpose and commitment. Gandhiji had a great influence on him and he championed the cause of the poor and stood against social evils such as untouchability. He dedicated himself to village reforms, Harijan uplift and Swadeshi. **Vandematharam** catapulted him to the domain of fame and his position as the most significant film maker was established. This film centered around the sensitive issues of the unemployment, need for Swadeshi industries and vocation based education. It was a big success. B.N. had written a novel on social problems in the society which was never published but it became the foundation of this film.

Next came **Sumangali**, a powerful plea for widow remarriage and it became a rage with moviegoers. Kumari enacted the role of a child widow who wanted to marry a man of her choice. Nagaiah enacted the role of an old man in the film and all of the film songs were big hits. Eventually she gets married breaking all social taboos and traditions. It was unpalatable for the people and the film bombed.

**Devatha** dealt with the issue of premarital pregnancy which caused an uproar among the conservatives. But he did not relent and this film proved to be a roaring success and brought him huge financial benefits. This film featured Nagaiah and Kumari in lead roles and Tanguturi Suryakumari (TSK), Bezawada Rajaratnam (BR) and Visweswaramma in supporting roles. All the songs were big hits. The first official



(male) playback recording was made. In all the above three films the strong influence of New Theatres, Calcutta, songs and music of K.L. Saigal, Pankaj Mullick and Pahari Sanyal is clearly evident.

**Bhakta Potana** (1942) was his next film and is considered a milestone in Telugu film history. The film was successful thanks to the powerful performances of Nagaiah and Jandhyala Gauri Natha Sastri as Potana and Srinatha respectively. This film was directed by K.V. Reddy. Songs of this film are widely sung even today.

Next film was **Swargaseema** based on G.D. Shaw's Pygmalion. It dealt with marital infidelity and its tragic consequences on a family. Famous Telugu film singer - Ghantasala sang his first song, a duet with Bhanumati and Ch. Narayan Rao, the first glamour hero of Telugu screen.

After **Swargaseema**, B.N. Reddi produced **Yogi Vemana** (1947) and **Gunasundari Katha** (1949), both directed by K.V. Reddy. **Yogi Vemana** was a truly complete musical picture. The tunes composed by Saluri took six months to complete. It was an absolutely authentic, artistically glorifying and emotionally satisfying film.

B.N. Reddi made **Bangor Papa** in 1954. This was based on Eliot's **Silas Marner** and won international acclaim. Chaplin who had seen this film in London had said that Eliot would have been the happiest man, if he could see it. B.N. showed how to make a movie without any big starring. This film portrays the love and affection of a ruffian for an infant, brilliantly emoted by SVR. It failed at the box office, but brought fresh laurels to B.N. Reddi.

B.N. Reddi's later films were: **Bhaagya Rekha** (1957), **Pooja Phalam** (1964), both made for another banner. **Raaja Mukudam** (1959), **Rangula Ratnam** (1966) and **Bangaru Pancharam** (1968).

B.N. Reddi passed away on 8 November 1977.

## Awards & Honours:

B.N. is the first person to receive the prestigious Phalke award from the South India. B.N. Reddi was the first Indian film personality to be honoured with a doctorate of literature. He was also the first film personality to be honoured with Padma Bhushan in 1974.

## Filmography:

*Vandematharam (Telugu) (1939), Sumangali (Telugu) (1940), Devatha (Telugu) (1941), Bhaktha Pothana (Telugu) (1942), Swargaseema (Telugu) (1945), Yogi Vemana (Telugu) (1947), Gunasundari Katha (Telugu) (1949), Malleeswari (Telugu) (1951), Pedda Manushulu (Telugu) (1954), Vandematharam (Telugu) (1955), Rajmakudam (Telugu) (1959), Rangula Ratnam (1966), Bangaru Pancharam (1968).*



# DHIREN GANGULI

## Pathfinder of Bengali Cinema

**D**HIREN Ganguli was born in 1893. He is regarded as one of the founders of the Bengal film industry. He belonged to a highly respected and aristocratic Bengali family from Barisal (Now in Bangladesh). He had a natural inclination for Drama and fine art which brought him in close contact with Rabindranath Tagore at Santiniketan. His appearance in Tagore's plays like Valmiki Pratibha, Raj and Daak Ghar and powerful role portrayal caught the Poet's attention. After passing out from Santiniketan in 1910 he joined the Scottish Church college at Calcutta but left it after six months, joined the Jubilee Arts Academy and thereafter the Government School of Arts where he completed the course in 1912 with distinction.

His orthodox family was against his determination to pursue a career in dramatics and the fine arts. He used to sell his paintings to some magazines to make his both ends meet. His training as a make up artist at Santiniketan secured him a job with Calcutta Police where he used to create disguises for its officers. An interest in photography evolved and he began creating different images of himself to be photographed. These were later published in book form under the title of *Bhanwar Abhivyake* bringing him appreciation and immediate recognitions and helped him get a job as Principal, Nizam Art college at Hyderabad in 1915.

The political situation was volatile in India when Ganguli entered the film world. In 1919, General Dyer had ordered troop-firing upon a peaceful gathering at Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar. Rabindranath Tagore returned his knighthood. The British Government of India jailed Mahatma Gandhi. Media was clamped down upon, films were subjected to heavy censoring. The Calcutta Board of Censor denied certificate to 13 of the 49 films up before it severely cutting the rest.

Ganguli and Nitish Chandra Lahary set up Indo British Film Company in 1921. His first film was **Bilet Pherat** or England returned. He wrote the story and enacted the title role. It is a comedy on the assumed mannerisms and confusion of an England returned Indian. The film was very successful and remains their biggest hit. This film was the forerunner of the many comedies he was to direct. In 1922 he made **Sadhu Aur Shaitan**.

In the year 1923 their partnership broke up. He returned to Hyderabad, and under Nizam's patronage, formed the Lotus film Company and churned out comedies

like - **Lady Teacher** and the **Marriage Tonic**. In 1924 **Razia Begam** was released at Ganguly's theatre. The film dealt with Razia Sultana, the daughter of Iltutmish (the most powerful ruler of the slave dynasty) and ruler after him. Her love for an Abyssinian slave had enraged the nobility then as the movie now enraged the Nizam. Ganguly was ordered to leave Hyderabad within a day. In 1928 Ganguly returned to Calcutta and set up British Dominion Film Company. In 1930 he made a film **Flames of Flesh** on the life of the celebrated beauty, Rani Padmini of Chittor. It was shot in Amber Palace, Rajasthan.

He was revered in Bengal for his pioneering work with his outstanding comedies such as **Bilet Pherat**, **The Lady teacher**, **The Marriage Tonic**, **Hara Gauri**, **The Stepmother**, **Chintamoni**, **Flame of the Flesh**, **Charitraheen**, **What not**, **Night Bird** and **Country girl**. Starting with silent films his career trajectory made a smooth transition to the talkie era. He also made a number of short comedies for New Theatres, shouldering the multiple chores of producers, director, writer and actor. His notable comedies for New Theatre were **Mastuto Bhai**, and **Excuse Me Sir**.

Lack of acute business acumen and failing health devastated him badly.

We was honoured with the Padma Bhusan in 1974 and given Dadasaheb Phalke Award in 1975.

### **Filmography:**

*Bilet Pherat (1918), England-Returned, Yashoda Nandan (1921), Hara Gauri, Indrajit, Lady Teacher, Sadhu Aur Shaitan, The Marriage Tonic (1922), Chintamoni, Step Mother, Yayati (1923), Sankracharya (1927), Alik Bagu, Flames of Flesh (1930), Charitraheen, Money Makes What Not (1931), Night Bird, Excuse Me Sir (1934), Vidroh (Hindi/Bengali) (1935), Country Girl (1936), Excuse Me Sir, Mastuto Bhai (1940), Ahuti (1941), Shesh Nivedan (1948), Cartoon (1949).*



# KANAN DEVI

## First Lady of Bengali Screen

**B**ORN Kananbala in 1916 she was initiated into music by her father at a very tender age, but his untimely death forced the little girl to opt for a film career. She got the rare opportunity to act in a film at the age of 10, for which she received just five rupees. The film was Madan Theatre's **Joydeb** in the year 1926.

For two decades, Kanan Devi was one of the brightest stars in the movie firmament probably the most popular and accomplished singing star the Indian screen has ever seen.

She was equally popular with both Hindi and Bengali movies. She rose to great heights when she joined New Theatres after working earlier with Madan Theatres and Radha Film. Kanan Devi had the opportunity of working under some of the greatest directors of the day like P.C. Barua, Debaki Bose and Phani Majumdar whilst her co-stars included K.L. Saigal, Pahari Sanyal, Ashok Kumar and P.C. Barua. Her last film in a romantic role was **Chandrashekhar** opposite Ashok Kumar, produced in both Hindi and Bengali in 1947.

P.C. Barua was unable to secure her services for the role of Paro in **Devdas** (1935) but she played the lead in his **Mukti** (1937).

**Mukti** made her a star and led to a fruitful association with New Theatres. The success of **Bidyapati** (Bengali)/**Vidyapati** (Hindi) (1937) in which she gave perhaps her finest performance, made her the studio's top star. To quote critic Krishna Chaitanya.

*"Kanan Devi has the marvelous gift to smoothly carrying over to the melodic elaboration, the intimate expressiveness of speech - occasional aspiration of vowels accented speech rhythms, sensitive manipulation of volume".*

Kanan Devi remained the top star of New Theatres till she resigned in 1941 and began to freelance in Hindi and Bengali films. **Jawab** the following year saw perhaps her biggest ever hit song *Toofan Mail*.

Kanan Devi, 'First Lady of the Bengali Screen,' star of **Vidyapati** and winner of the Phalke award in 1977, recalled to Swapan Mullick:

*'My first appearance on screen was in 1926 in Madan Theatres' Jaidev. I was hired at a salary of Rs. 25 but after the film I only got Rs. 5 in hand as the*



*middlemen had pocketed the rest At New Theatres, 'It was an atmosphere in which we were all equal members of a family. The studio car collected us in the morning as if we were on our way to school. We worked the whole day and took music lessons in the evening. If there was not much work, some of us would get together for a game of hide and seek or badminton in the evening before we were dropped home'.*

But even though she was a singing sensation she considered music and song as secondary to the primary business of telling a story. In fact powerful narrative appeal made up for most of the technical and other deficiencies Bengal cinema may have suffered from at that time and was a key to the success of the New Theatres film.

Kanan Devi turned producer with **Shrimati Pics** in 1949 and later launched the Sabhyasachi Collective with the film **Ananya** (1949). Her own productions were mainly based on Sarat Chandra stories and were directed by her husband Haridas Bhattacharya. She produced 11 Bengali films most of which were based on Sarat Chatterji's novels.

## Awards & Honours

Her film **Andhare Alo** was awarded the all India certificate of merit in 1958 carrying a cash prize and a silver medal.

This film also entered at the Karlovy Vary film festival. Kanan Devi had earlier received the Bengal Film Journalist's Best Actress Award twice for **Parichay** in 1941 and **Sesh Uttar** in 1942. The Padmashree was bestowed upon her in 1968, and she received the Hiralal Sen Award in 1990. After retiring from silver screen in 1962, she continued to do a lot of social work for film people. She was the founder of the Mahila Shilpi Mahal, dedicated to the support of fellow artists who were old and infirm, and unable to support themselves. Kanan Devi served as a member of the West Bengal State Award Committee, the Film Development Board, the Documentary Newsreel Committee, and the Expert Committee which sanctioned Government loans for films production. In her last days, she was loved and respected as the Mother Figure of the Bengali Film Industry.

## Golden Voice:

*Ambwa ki dali-Vidyapati (1937), Ban men jo bhi mehke-Jawani ki Reet (1939), Chali pawan har son-Jawani ki Reet (1939), Chhup na jana-Jawab (1942), Dekhat hain ab bat-Vidyapati, Doley hriday ki nayya-Vidya Pati, Door des ka rehne wala-Jawab, Hamri nagaria mein-Vidyapati, Kaisa ujra Chaman-Kukti (1937), Kaun man lubhaya-Jawani ki Reet, Kuchh yaad rahe to-Jawab, Lachhmi*



*moorat-Street Singer (1938), Loot Liyo man dheer-Jawani Ki Reet, Meri Majboorion ne-Hospital (1943), More angna mein-Vidyapati, Na jane kya hai-Mukti, Prabhu ji-Hospital, Preetam se preet-Street Singer, Sanwarya man bhaya-Mukti, Toofan Mail-Jawab, Zara naino se naina-Hospital.*

### **Filmography:**

*Char Darvesh (1933), Hari Bhakti (1934), Khooni Kaun (1936), Mukti, Vidyapati (1937), Street Singer (1938), Jawani ki Reet, Sapera (1939), Haar Jeet (1940), Lagan (1941), Jawab (1942), Hospital (1943), Ban Phool (1945), Arabian Nights, Krishna Leela (1947), Faisla, Tum Aur Main, (1947), Chandrashekhar (1948).*



## NITIN BOSE

### CREATIVE CAMERAMAN

**W**HEN your inner callings and support from your immediate vicinity converge they tend to amalgamate in such a way as to facilitate the birth and luxuriant growth of a phenomena. So happened with Nitin Bose. He was born at Calcutta on 27th April, 1897 in a highly influential Brahmo family. His father H. Bose owned a large pharmaceutical company and was least interested in either films or photography but on discovering Nitin's natural inclination towards them, presented him with a movie camera, a projector and a film developing machine.

Nitin Bose engaged himself as a freelance newseel photographer and developed contacts abroad for the supply of his clippings. He also produced several documentary shorts between the year 1921 and 1925.

**Incarnation** (1925) the silent film produced by Jayagopal provided him his first full fledged assignment as a cameraman. By 1930 he was duly established in the trade. B.N. Sircar invited him to join New Theatres and this turned out to be a long association. He was assigned the photography of **Chandidas** directed by Debaki Kumar Bose in Bengali, and when Sircar decided to remake the film in Hindi, he offered Nitin Bose the chance to direct the film.

Coming decade engaged him in directing several bi-lingual movies for New Theatres, all of which were commercially successful. **Jiban Maran**, **Dushman** (Hindi) are his most noted films in Hindi. **Deshar Mati**, **Dharti Mata** (Hindi) also had strong undertones. After directing the bi lingual **Kashinath** in 1943, he left New Theatres to make his name in Western India. He continued to churn out successful films in Bombay and **Ganga Jamuna** won him the National Award as best director in 1969. Nitin Bose spent his last days at Calcutta. He was given Dadasahed Phalke Award in 1977.

In a tribute to Nitin Govind Nihalani writes in, Cinema Vision :

*Just before the first Great War, Nitin Bose's father gave him his first cine-camera as a birthday present, a Houghton Butcher costing Rs. 165. Bose reminisced, 'For several nights after everyone was asleep, I would quietly bring up my camera to my bedroom on the second floor. I would place it on the pillow by my head and sleep with my hand on the camera and the feeling that it is my camera, and the camera was me, as if we were twins. That was my attitude throughout life'.*



In 1929 he acted in a film **Baji Prabhu Despande**

### **Filmography:**

*Incarnation (1925), Subah Ka Sitar (1932), Chandidas, Daku Mansoor (1934), Dhoop Chhaon, Bhagyachakra (Bengali) (1935), President, Didi (Bengali) (1937), Dharti Mata (Hindi), Deshar Mati (Bengali) (1938), Dushman, Jiban Maran (Bengali) (1939), Lagan (1941), Kashinath (Hindi/Bengali), Paraya Dhan, Bichar (Bengali) (1943), Mujrim (1944), Mazdoor (1945), Milan, Nauka Dubi (Bengali) (1946), Drishti Daan (Bengali) (1947), Samar (Bengali) (1949), Mashal (1950), Deedar (1951), Dard-E-Dil (1953), Waris (1954), Amar Saigal (1955), Char Dost, Madhabir Janye (Bengali) (1956), Kath Putli, Jogajog (Bengali) (1957), Ganga Jamuna (1961), Nartaki (1963), Dooj Ka Chand (1964), Hum Kahan Ja Rahe Hain (1966), Agnisnan (1968), Ummed (1971), Samaanta (1975).*



## R.C. BORAL

### Music Maestro

**M**MUSIC was his soul mate. Musical ambience at his home provided the fertile ground for the luxuriant growth of R.C. Boral's talent. His father was a celebrated musician. R.C. Boral had a long session of training in Indian classical music and he participated in several conferences held at Lucknow, Allahabad and Benaras. Work in Indian music section of All India Radio at the nascent stage of broadcasting constituted the initial leg of his career. With the coming of talkies, music acquired an important role in film making.

As director his debut film under New Theatres banner was **Mohabat ke Ansu**. The playback singing and re-recording had not yet been ushered in Indian Cinema. Musicians were pressed into service during the actual shooting of a scene.

R.C. Boral, in collaboration with Nitin Bose introduced the system of playback singing in India. He is credited with bringing the Sur Samarat K.L. Saigal to films through whose voice he popularized the new style of ghazal singing with a classical base. Under his baton Saigal and Kanan Devi sang some of their finest songs. He improved and enriched the Indian film music and defined the use of 'effect music' as distinct from general music for background score. Boral is remembered for his excellent music in **Chandidas** (1934), **Devdas** (1935), **Vidyapati** (1937), **Street Singer** (1938), **Sapera** (1939), **Lagan** (1941), **Saugandh** (1942).

### Awards & Honours:

BFJA Award for Best Music Director for film **Wapas** in 1944 and received Phalke Award in 1978.

### Filmography:

*Mohabat ke Ansu* (1932), *Subah Ka Sitara*, *Zinda Laash* (1932), *Puran Bhagat*, *Rajrani Meera* (1933), *Chandidas*, *Daku Mansoor*, *Rooplekha* (1934), *After the Earth quake*, *Dhoop Chhaon* (1935), *Anath Ashram*, *President*, *Vidyapati* (1937), *Abhigain*, *Street Singer* (1938), *Jawani Ki Reet*, *Sapera* (1939), *Haar jeet* (1940), *Lagan* (1941), *Saugandh* (1942), *Wapas* (1943), *Humrahi*, *Wasiyatnama* (1945), *Anjangarh* (1948), *Pehla Aadmi* (1950), *Dard-E-Dil*, *Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu* (1953), *Amar Saigal*, *Swami Vivekananda* (1955).



# SOHRAB MODI

## Lion of Indian Cinema

**T**OWERING personality, reverberating voice with a tinge of authority capable of seeping deep down in the psyche of viewers is what widely separates Sohrab Modi from others in the movie world. He was born in Bombay. He basically belonged to the Parsee theatre. His career witnessed a seamless passage from the era of silent movies to talkies.

Shakespeare fascinated him to a great extent and had an important role in his personality development. He had a number of Shakespearan plays translated into Urdu with remarkable success. He was also known as a Shakespearean actor.

Sohrab experienced a little pull towards cinema when he built and ran cinema at Gwalior in 1915. He ventured into the entertainment world in 1925 in the field of theatre. Theatre had started declining in the early 1930s due to the advent of talkie films. He floated Minerva Movietone at Bombay in 1935 with its studio at Sewri and played an important role in the grooming of Indian cinema in terms of depth and range. His first two films were the filmed versions of plays. **Khoon Ka Khoon** (1935) was an adaptation of Hamlet and marked Naseem Bano's acting debut. The second **Saed-e-Hawas** (1935) was based on Shakespeare's **King John**. Both films failed at the box office.

Contemporary social issues were pivotal in the making of his early films. Alcoholism inspired the formation of **Meetha Zahar** (1938) and the right of Hindu woman to divorce in **Talaq** (1938). Minerva Movietone was famous for its trilogy of historical spectacles that were to follow **Pukar** (1939), **Sikandar** (1941) and **Prithvi Vallabh** (1943) wherein Modi made the most of his gift for grandiloquence to encapsulate all that is grand about Indian history.

**Pukar-** This film was set in the backdrop of the Mughal court of Emperor Jehangir and is based on an incident which is perhaps historically untrue to highlight Jehangir's justice 'eye for an eye' when his queen accidentally kills a washer-woman. Many of its key scenes were staged in the magnificent courts and palaces of the Mughals – that gave the film an authenticity the studio built sets could never achieve. The charisma of its stars Chandra Mohan and Naseem Bano and the dialogues by Kamaal Amrohi with its literary flourish and innate grace ensured the popularity of films.



Sohrab Modi's film sets often resembled an *akhada* or gymnasium. So particular was Modi about details that while shooting for **Sikandar** (1941) he had even discovered the actual weight of the historical figure of Sikandar (Alexander the Great). Every alternate day, the actors had to strip down to their underwear and stand on the weighing scales, closely scrutinized by the director. Then the cast was subjected to a strict regime of diet and exercise.

**Sikandar** was Modi's greatest film which immortalized Prithviraj Kapoor playing the title role. The epic film was set in 326 B.C. when Alexander the Great, having conquered Persia and the Kabul Valley, descends to the Indian border at Jhelum and encounters Porus (Modi) who stops the advance of his troops. **Sikandar**'s lavish mounting, huge set and production values equalled the best of Hollywood than particularly for its rousing and spectacular battle scenes and was rated by a British writer as... "...well upto the standard of that old masterpiece "The Birth of Nation"

Its dramatic, declamatory dialogues gave both Prithviraj Kapoor and Sohrab Modi free reign to their histrionic proclivities. The release of the film coincided with World War II at its peak and in India the political atmosphere was tense following Gandhiji's call to civil disobedience. **Sikander** further aroused patriotic feeling and national sentiments. Thus though **Sikander** was approved by the Bombay censor board, it was later banned from some of the theatres serving army cantonments. However, its appeal to nationalism is so great and direct, it remained popular for years. It was revived in Delhi in 1961 during the Indian march into Goa.

**Prithvi Vallabh** was based on K.M. Munshi's novel of the same name. The film's major highlights were the confrontations between Modi and Durga Khote, the haughty queen Mrinalvati who tries to humiliate him publicly but then falls in love with him.

Although Modi went beyond the Parsee theatre for his choice of themes and even tackled such themes as illicit passion (**Jailor** 1838) remade in 1958 and incest in **Bharosa** (1940), his formal approach remained tied to it and evoked the way Parsee Theatre looked and sounded – using frontal compositions and staging the narrative in spatial layers with copious use of Urdu dialogues.

In 1946 after his relationship with Naseema had run its course though she still worked with him in **Sheesh Mahal** (1950) and **Nausherwan-e-Adil** (1957), he married actress Mehtab who was 20 years younger than him and whom he directed in **Parakh** (1944) and India's first film in technicolour **Jhansi Ki Rani** (1953).

For **Jhansi Ki Rani**, Modi had technicians flown in from Hollywood. Mehtab starred as the young queen of Jhansi who took up arms against the British during the First War of Independence in 1857 with Modi essaying the role of the **Rajguru**, her chief advisor. The film was notable for its authenticity in creating the right period and – delineating historical event, its spectacular battle scenes and Mehtab's stirring performance even if she was far too old for the role. She achieves stirring dignity in



the role as she vows to protect Jhansi from all enemies both within and outside. The ball sequence in Jhansi's palace was superbly shot and Modi achieves great emotional appeal with the characters. Unfortunately the film failed to connect with the audience and was a costly misfire for Modi as it crashed at the box office.

Modi however bounced back with **Mirza Ghalib** (1954). The film based on the life of the great Indian poet who lived during the reign of Bahadur Shah Zafar, the last of the Mughal emperors, won the President's Medal for Best Feature film of 1954. The film beautifully captured the mood of the period, its hedonistic pursuits and the fading magnificence of the court of the last Mughal whose poets like Zauq, Momin, Tishna, Shefta and Ghalib assembled to recite their verse. Mirza Ghalib also saw Suraiya's finest character performance as she made alive and vivid the role of the married Ghalib's lover, a courtesan. Ghalib also saw some of her finest singing – *Aah ko chahiye ek umar, Nuktacheen hai gham-e-dil, Dil-e-naadan tujhe hua kya hai, Yeh na thi humari kismet* etc.

Her singing is till date regarded as the definitive Ghalib. In fact, India's then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru paid her the ultimate compliment by telling her that she had brought Mirza Ghalib to life. **Mirza Ghalib** was awarded the President's medal as the best film of 1954.

After Mirza Ghalib Minerva Movietone faced reversal of fortune and with its closure a great chapter in the history of Hindi and Urdu came to an end. Sohrab Modi continued directing films for other producers and also accepted acting assignments which included Bimal Roy's **Yahudi**. Sohrab Modi's last film was Kamal Amrohi's **Razia Sultan**.

## Filmography:

*Hamlet* (1935), *Saed-E-Havas* (1936), *Atma Tarang*, *Khan Bahadur*, *Divorce* (Dir) (1937), *Jalor*, *Meetha Zahar* (Dir), *Vasanti* (Prod) (1938), *Pukar* (Dir), (1939), *Bharosa*, *Main Hari* (Prod), *Vasiat* (Prod) (1940), *Sikandar* (1941), *Phir Milenge* (Dir), *Ulti Ganga* (Prod) (1942), *Bhakta Raidas* (Prod), *Prarthana* (Prod), *Prithvi Vallabh* (1943), *Parakh* (Dir), *Dr. Kumar* (Prod), *Pattharon Ka Saudagar* (Prod) (1944), *Ek Din Ka Sultan* (Dir) (1945), *Shama* (Prod) (1946), *Diwani* (Prod), *Majdhar* (Dir) (1947), *Mera Munna* (Prod), *Munna* (Prod) (1948), *Daulat* (Dir) (1949), *Narsinha Avtar* (Dir), (1949), *Sheesh Mahal* (1950), *Jhansi Ki Rani* (1953), *Mirza Ghalib* (Dir), *Waris* (1954), *Ghar Ghar Mein Diwali* (Prod), *Kundan* (1955), *Raj Hath* (1956), *Nausherwan-E-Adil* (1957), *Farishta*, *Jailor*, *Yahudi*, (1958) *Do Gunde* (Prod), *Minister*, *Pahli Raat*, (1959), *Ghar Ki Laaj*, *Meera Ghar Mere Bachche* (1960), *Bharat Milap* (1965), *Woh Koi Aur Hoga*, (1967), *Samay Bada Balwan* (1969), *Jwala* (1970), *Ek Nari Ek Brahmchari*, *Veer Chatrasal* (1971), *Meena Kumari Ki Amar Kahani*, *Ghar Ki Laaj* (1979), *Ganga Maang Rahi Balidan* (1981), *Rustom* (1982), *Razia Sultan* (1983).



## P. JAIRAJ

### Versatile Performer

**P** JAIRAJ witnessed a passage from silent era of movies to the talkies and remained in the arena of filmdom for seven decades. His versatile performances in a variety of roles instilled an aesthetic and musical sense into the vulnerable psyche of movie-goers.

Paidypathy Jairula Naidu was born on September 28, 1909, in Karimnagar (Andhra Pradesh). His father was an accountant in Public Works Department. Young Jairaj received his school education in Hyderabad. He then joined the Nizam's college. During his college days he enacted roles in Shakespeare's plays. This participation overshadowed his academic career and contrary to his parent's aspirations and dream of seeing him as an established doctor, he ventured into the film world to unfold his acting talent. He was keenly interested in body sculpting and this stood him in the time of need.

He landed in Bombay in 1928 and began his career with the role of a duplicate stuntman in the Sharda Film company. He took keen interest in all areas of film making, helping the camera crew, managing the sets, assisting in the editing process, tinkering in the labs. His assignment of painting posters for films took him to various film studios, where his magnificent physique and Greek god looks caught the attention and secured him roles in various silent films. Initially, he worked as a 'double' for prominent actors of the time, before getting major roles in silent films such as **Rifle girl**, **Bhabhi** and **Hamari Baat** and soon he was there for the role of a hero.

Jairaj recalls his early days in film industry as a full time employee of Young India Pictures in a conversation to Uma da Cunha in Cinema Vision :

*'I was given two square meals a day and three rupees a month. I shared a room with four other boarders in Girgaum.. We used to reach the sets by 7.30 am and pack up by 5 pm. A cunning incentive was a free shave given by a waiting barber at the studio.' Censorship in those days was no big problem. 'Only one censor officer was necessary. He came to the first screening and was given a royal treatment – refreshments etc. He then scribbled a Censor number which was flashed via a glass plate in the second show.*



He had a chance meeting with the prominent Marathi writer – dramatist Mama Wareerkar. But in those days people from good families shunned film personalities. Jairaj was from a high-caste family. The visionary Wareerkar persuaded Jairaj to take to movies which he did. Jairaj got associated with Mama Wareerkar and Indulal Yagnik. They cast him as a hero in **Jagmagati Jawani** (1929) and **Raseeli Rani**. He acted in 11 silent films between 1929-1931.

In the year 1931 a new era was heralded in the film industry with the advent of talkies. Songs followed the sound. Though not a good singer, he managed to wrest continuous film assignments. Playback singing came to his rescue soon and there was no hurdle after that.

Jairaj spoke to Uma da Cunha about that transitional phase:

*“We were on the eve of the making really fine films – stories of social value, good respectable actors coming in, silent masterpieces from abroad, everything going for us’. Then came the talkie film and it disturbed everything. There was chaos. ‘Everybody said it was a new-fangled invention which won’t last... There were others who said it had come to stay’. The early talkies were described in terms of percentages: 20% talkie, 50% talkie, with much of the talkie bits being actually song and dance routines.*

In his career Jairaj had acted in over 200 films. He got the opportunity to work with all the leading actresses of his time.

Meena Kumari played his daughter in **Ek Hi Bhool**, and his beloved in **Magroor**. He acted with Devika Rani in **Hamari Baat**, Nargis in **Anjuman**, **Darogaji**, **Roomal** and **Sagar**, Suraiya in **Amar Kahani**, **Rajput** and **Resham**, Leela Chitnis in **Choti si duniya**, **Char Ankhen**, Noorjehan in **Humjoli**, Nimmi in **Raj Mukut**, Geeta Bali in **Garibi** and scores of others like Nigar Sultana, Mehtab Khurshid, Durga Khote, Nirupa Roy etc.

Jairaj began to accept character roles from mid sixties. He did **Insaniyat** (1955), **Mujrim Kaun**, **Khooni Kaun**, **Baharon Ke Sapne**, **Neel Kamal**, **Raste Aur Manzil** and other movies. He also did cameo roles in **Don** and **Khoon Bhari Maang**.

Jairaj also acted in three International films. The Russian production **Pardesi**, MGMs **Maya** and 20<sup>th</sup> century Fox’s **Nine Hours to Rama**. The last film was banned in India as it was based on Mahatma Gandhi’s assassination. Jairaj also played in Gujarati and Marathi films but surprisingly none in his mother tongue Telugu. He also produced and directed **Sagar** starring Nargis. Dilip Kumar, Pratima and Bharat Bhushan. But this venture bombed at the box office. This taught him many lessons – most important being not to try his hand at production.



## Awards & Honours:

Jairaj had been an active member of the Cine Artistes Association since 1939. He had also been associated with the production of musical shows for the benefit of armed forces and charities to collect funds for national causes. He also took keen interest in the propagation of classical dance and music. In 1981 Jairaj was honoured with the prestigious Dadasaheb Phalke award for his outstanding contribution to Indian cinema.

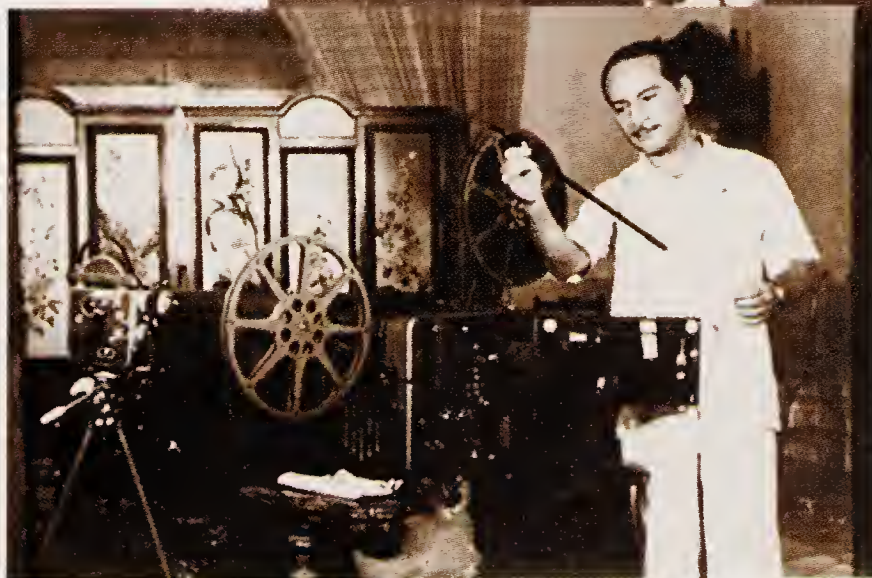
He died on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2000 at the age of 91.

## Filmography:

*Queen of Fairies (1931), Shikari (1932), Aurat Ka Dil, Maya Jaal, Patit Pawan, Zahar –E-Ishk (1933), Dard-E-Dil, Mill Mazadoor, Sair-E-Paristan, Vasavdatta (1934), Jeevan Natak, Sher Dil Aurat (1935), Berozgaar, Garib Parwar (1936), Sagi, Toofani Khazana (1937), Bhabhi, Madhur Milan, Rifle Girl (1938), Bijli, Choti si Duniya, Jugari, Leather Face, Marad (1939), Ek Hi Bhool (1940), Mala, Prabhat, Swami (1941), Khilauna, Kirti, Mera Gaon, Nai Duniyan, Tamanna (1942), Hamari Baat, Nai Kahani, Naya Tarana, Prem Sangeet (1943), Char Ankhen, Panna, Betaj Badshah, Do Fantoosh (1944), Rahat (1945), Dhanwan, Hamjoli, Rajputani, Salgirah, Sassi Punnu, Shahjehan (1946), Bela, Manmani (1947), Anjuman, Azadi Ki Raah Par, Chanda Ki Chandni, Nao, Sajan Ka Ghar (1948), Amar Kahani, Darogaji, Garibi, Ladli, Roomal, Singaar (1949), Hindustan Hamara, Magroor, Raj Mukut (1950), Rajput, Sagar (1951), Lal Kunwar (1952), Munna, Sahid E- Azam Bhagat Singh (1954), Haseena, Insaniyat, Kanchan, Lakhon Men Ek, Pyara Dushman, Teerandaz (1955), Hatimtai, Hotel, Parivar, Sultana Daku (1956), Amarsinh Rathor, Jahazi Lutera, Mumtaz Mahal, Pardesi, Patal Pari (1957), Chalbazz, Daughter of Sindbad, Raj Pratigya (1958), Bazigar, Bhagwan Aur Shaitan, Char Dil Char Rahen, Jagga Daku, Samrat Prithviraj Chauhan, Tipu Sultan (1959), Do Admi, Lal Quila, Miss Goodnight, Return of Mr. Superman, Superman, Veer Durgadas (1960), Jai Chittor, Razia Sultana (1961), Aalha Udal, Banke Sawariya, Bijli Chamke Jamna Paar, Jadugar Daku, Kala Samunder, Pick Pocket (1962), Captain Sheroo, Chandrashekhar Azad, Gul-E-Bakavali, Zarak Khan, Zingaro, Ek Din Ka Badshah, Hameer Hath, His Highness, Khufia Mahal, Maharani Padmini, Sarfarosh, (1964), Baghi Haseena, Main Hoon Jadugar, Mujrim Kaun Khooni Kaun (1965), Baharon Ke Sapne (1967), Neel Kamal, Raste Aur Manzil (1968), Beti Tumhare Jaisi (1969), Gunah Aur Kanoon, Jeevan Mrityu (1970), Choti Bahu (1971), Baazigar, Shahzada (1972), Alam Ara, Chalak, Chhalia, Gehri Chaal, Naag Mere Saathi, Nanha Shikari, Sooraj Aur Chand (1973), Chor Chor (1974), Daffa 302, Daku Aur Bhagwan, Dharmatma, Himalaya Se Ooncha, Kala*



# NITIN BOSE



Films directed by Nitin Bose:

*Top (left) Ganga Jamuna 1961, Hindi, Top (right) Nartaki, 1963, Hindi;  
(Above) in one of his creative moments*

1977





# R.C.BORAL



*Above ((left) with Talat Mahmud during the song recording of Swami Vivekananda, 1955, Hindi; Above (right) receiving Phalke Award*

1978





# SOHRAB MODI



*Above (left) Actor par excellence : in Yahudi, 1958, Hindi ;  
Above (right) Chander Mohan and Naseem Banu in Pukar, 1939, Hindi  
directed by Sohrab Modi*

1979



# JAIRAJ



*Above (left) Bharat Bhushan and Nargis in Sagar, 1951, Hindi, directed by  
Jairaj; Above (centre) with Master Romi in Munna, 1954, Hindi directed  
by K.A. Abbas; Above (right) with Durga Khote in Bela, 1947, Hindi*

1980



# NAUSHAD



*Above (left) immersed in Riyaz; Above (right) with  
Lata and Mohammad Rafi*

1981



# L.V.PRASAD



Films directed by L.V. Prasad :

*Above (left) Mana Desam, 1949, Tamil; Above (right) L.V. Prasad himself and Bhanumathi in Rani, 1952, Tamil/Hindi*

1982





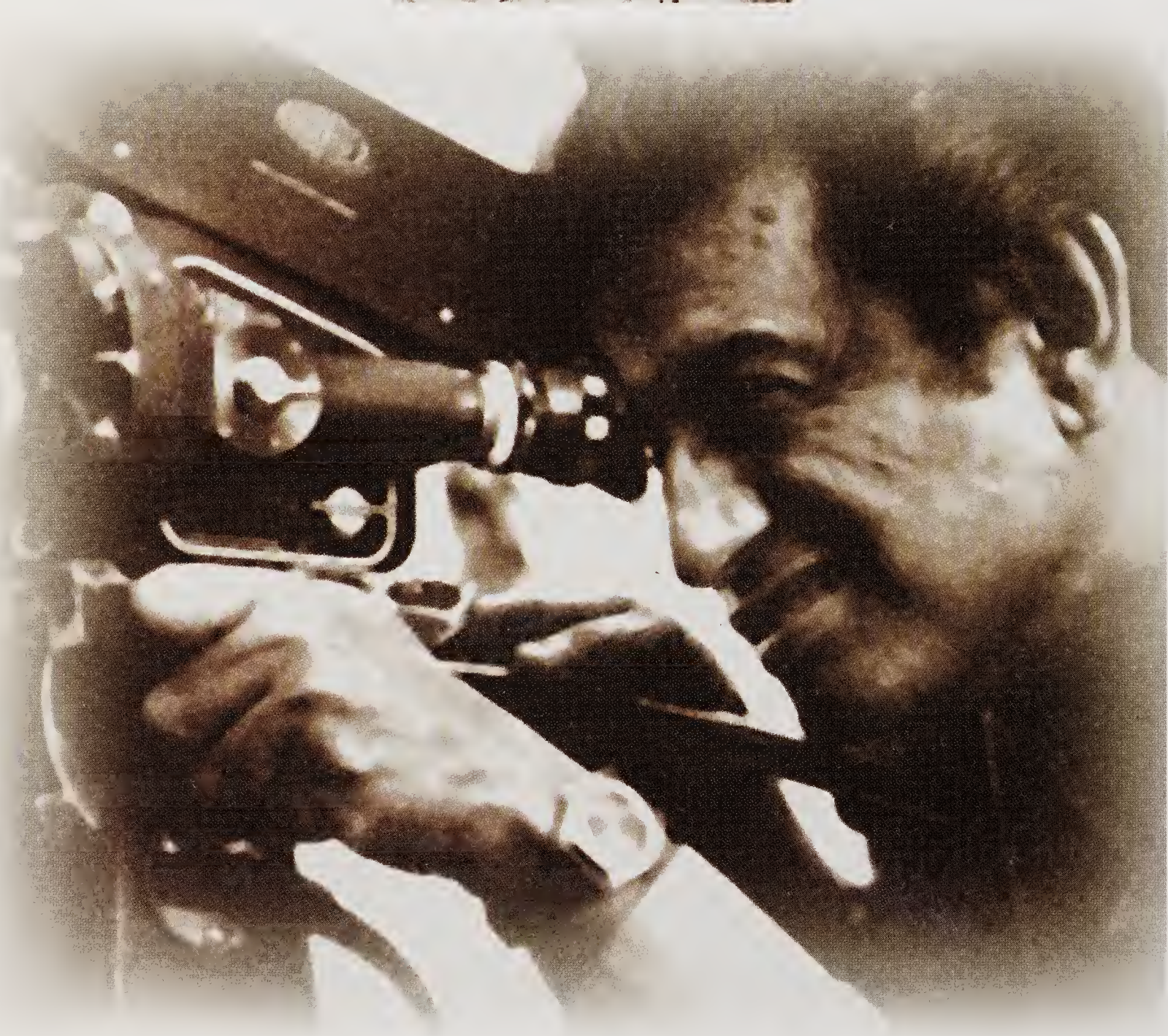
# DURGA KHOTE



*Top (left) in Amar Jyoti, 1936, Hindi; Above (left) as Lady Macbeth in Rajmukut, a Marathi adaptation of Macbeth, 1954; Above (right) in Nandakumar, 1941, Marathi/Hindi*

1983





# SATYAJIT RAY

Films directed by Satyajit Ray:

(Top) Charulata, 1984, Bengali; (Above) Pather Panchali, 1955, Bengali

1984



*Sona, Salaakhen, Sholay, Toofan, Zoro (1975), Bairaag, Charas, Faasla, Hera Pheri, Meera Shyam, Mera Jiwan, Nag Champa, Raksha Bandhan (1976), Chaila Babu, Daku aur Mahatma, Dil Aur Patthar, Jai Dwarkadhish, Subah Zaroor Aayei, Veeru Ustad (1977), Aakhri Daku, Anjam, Don, Hamara Sansar, Muqaddar Ka Sikandar (1978), Ahinsa, Aulea-E-Islam, Deen Aur Imman, Heera Moti, Ikraar, Maha Sati Maina Sundari, Shiksha, Zehreeley (1979), Chunaoti, Desh Drohi, Jyoti Bane Jwala, Kala Pani, Shaan, Shiv Shakti (1980), Karate (1983), Khoon Bhari Maang (1988), Ajooba, Iraada (1991).*



# NAUSHAD

## Innovative Musician

**N**AUSHAD a legend in the world of Hindi film music was best known for his Raag based semi classical compositions. He was born on 25<sup>th</sup> December 1919 in the erstwhile princely state of Awadh now known as Lucknow. Since his childhood he had an intense inclination towards music and was least interested in his studies. From the very beginning, his absence from school was more or less regular and he used to spend hours listening to the live orchestra.

His escapades, when came to the notice of his father, invited his fury and he was severely scolded and thrashed. But this, instead of weaning him away from music, made him more resolute to pursue a musical career. His father's ultimatum to either give up music or leave the house proved to be a turning point in his life and he opted for the music and joined a drama company in a theatre at Gopalganj in Lucknow.

In that era of silent movies, background music was provided by a live band of musicians during the screening of picture. There was a cinema theatre near Naushad's house. Laddan Khan, the leader of the band, was a proficient harmonium player. His rendering captivated Naushad to such a great extent that ultimately he came under Laddan Khan's wing.

The drama company Naushad had joined disintegrated and Naushad was literally thrown on the streets. But divine power guided him and destiny took him to the city of Bombay where his talent bloomed. His earlier acquaintance with one Abbdul Alim Nami proved helpful in this crisis. He was a teacher in a school in Colaba. He provided him shelter. Here started his persistent struggle. A perfectionist to the core, Naushad never compromised with quality and precision in his music work. Gifted with a natural style of his own and his own alone, this finest exponent of classical, folk and modern music alike has consistently created something original and versatile in his compositions thus carving out a suitable niche for himself. Naushad would approach the managers and producers of different studios to give them demonstration of his proficiency in playing the harmonium. He was continuously facing the days of disappointment and frustration but Mr. Nami's offer of sending him back to his father was not acceptable to him.



He learnt different facets of music from different Gurus. Prominent among them were Ustad Babban Saheb (harmonium), Ustad Yusuf Ali (Sitar), Ustad Umar Ansari (Poetry) and Ustad Zhande Khan (Film music).

He could get the job of a harmonium player in the music staff of the Ranjit film company. He strived to become a music composer. His creative talent was recognized by H.D.N. Madhok, the well known song writer and on his recommendation he got a job in Prakash studio and also got assignment to provide music for a forthcoming film. Naushad wanted to modernize the old music in new colours.

Naushad's enthusiasm and dedication to work won him Chandulal's attention under whom he worked. **Mirza Sahiban's** successful completion and its being box office hit prompted his permanent appointment as a musician on the Ranjit roster on a salary of Rs. 75 a month with cuts for days on which he was absent. The then Ranjit's music director Gyan Dutt did not pay any notice to him but later on when Khemchand Prakash succeeded Gyan Dutt, Naushad was appointed as a regular assistant to Khem Chand Prakash. Naushad worked happily with Prakash for three films but had to quit because of his illness and consequent absence from the work. Naushad and Shiekh Hassan Banatwala launched Rainbow Recording Company with an office in Lamington Road but it paled before HMV and soon faced closure and Naushad was again in trouble.

But this trouble phased out soon. Bhawani wished to make him music director but preliminary talks failed to convince him about Naushad's capabilities but Madhok's strong recommendations and personal guarantee did the needful. Salary was fixed at Rs. 100 a month to be raised to Rs. 150 after three months. Naushad worked day and night to prove his worth. Music recording was completed within three months but he never got the promised promotion. With **Prem Nagar** assignment nearing completion another assignment on Madhok's recommendations to direct the music for a film titled **Kanchan** was acquired. This was produced by Gvalani under his own banner of Chitra Production at the Ranjit Studio.

An offer from Prakash Pictures to compose music for **Mala** was in the waiting on Rs. 600 payment followed by **Darshan**, and **Station Master** on the payment of Rs. 1200 and Rs. 1500 respectively. In the film **Station Master**, Suraiya made her first appearance singing her own song.

Naushad's success attracted Kardar's attention, who engaged him for the film **Nai Duniya** as a music director and afterwards he was engaged on a regular basis under Kardar production till 1952.

Naushad was one of the first to introduce sound mixing and the separate recording of voice and music tracks in playback singing. He was the first to combine the flute and the clarinet, the sitar and mandolin. He also introduced the accordion to



Hindi film music and was among the first to concentrate on music to extend character's moods and dialogues through music.

Naushad's glorious career began as Assistant Music director with his first successful film **Mirza Sahiba** in Punjabi. Success came around 1942 with the film **Station Master** but with the resounding success of his first musical blockbuster **Ratan** in 1944-45 he established his solid reputation as a composer of extraordinary calibre. Unique use of folk tunes was pivotal to the popularity of film songs.

In the beginning of his career, he began composing music mainly for Kardar and Mehboob productions, like **Anmol Ghadi, Jadoo, Dulari, Dastan, Anokhi Ada, Andaz, Aan, Amar** and **Mother India**. All these films celebrated either a Silver, Gold or Platinum Jubilee success. Through the film **Baiju Bawara** he introduced classical music to cinema lovers and broke the myth that classical music could not appeal to the masses. This proved a historical milestone.

- In **Baiju Bawara** he made innovative use of the voice and talents of reputed and famous classical singers like Pt. D.V. Paluskar and Amir Khan Saheb. He also gave a new identity to the voice of Mohammad Rafi by exposing his talent.
- In **Baiju Bawara** and **Mugal-e-Azam**, he experimented with the Bhajans and Quawalis to a mesmerizing effects. In films like **Dastan** and **Jadoo** he created lovely effect by introducing choir and church music in the background.
- With the film **Aan**, he became the first music director to use a hundred piece orchestra, while in the film **Udan Khatola**, he recorded the entire song without the use of orchestra. In this he replaced the sound of musical instruments with chorus sound of humming.
- Naushad introduced a unique change in the existing system of music recording. He was the first composer to have developed the system of western notation in India.
- He was the first composer to understand and emphasize the importance of background music and made effective use of it.
- Naushad was by and large, greatly responsible in tuning the voice of Lata Mangeshkar, and it is no coincidence that the tunes occupy the higher rung in Lata's long list in terms of popularity and artistry. In his music compositions he gave equal importance to poetry and its meaning. His music highlights and enhances the beauty and sweetness of poetry.



Though he lived in the world of films, he never made himself a victim of commercial compromises. He received popularity and demand on his own terms which is why his journey has been slow but extremely steady.

In 1960s and with the decline of Dilip Kumar, Naushad, who used to compose music for most of the thespian's films also suffered a reversal of fortune as film after film came unstuck at the box office. Naushad completed **Pakeezah** (1972) and continued doing an occasional film right upto 1990s but the magic of the yore was missing.

The legendary music composer died on 5 May 2006 following a heart attack. He was 86.

## Awards & Honours:

For his tradition of excellence in creativity and integrity, he received many awards and honours prominent among those being the nation's highest award in films, the Dadasaheb Phalke Award in 1982, the L.M. Award in 1984, and Amir Khusro Award in 1987, Maharashtra Gaurav Puruskar and Padma Bhushan.

Out of 65 films in which he composed music nine are Golden Jubilee and 26 Silver Jubilee success. Five films have been made on his life and work. They include: **Naushad Ka Sangeet, Sangeet Ka Badshah, Naushad (T.V.) 1972. Biography by Doordarshan; B.B.C. London T.V.'s Movie Mahal Naushad and T.V. serial Zinda Ka Safar.**

## Filmography:

*Prem Nagar (1940), Darshan, Mala (1941), Nai Duniya, Sharda, Station Master (1942), Kanoon, Namaste, Sanjog (1943), Bahar, Geet, Jeevan, Pahle Aap, Rattan (1944), Sanyasi (1945), Anmol Ghadi, Keemat, Shahjehan (1946), Dard, Elan, Natak (1947), Anokhi Ada, Mela (1948), Andaz, Chandni Raat, Dillagi, Dulari (1949), Babul, Dastaan (1950), Deedar, Jadoo (1951), Aan, Baiju Bawra, Diwana (1952), Char Chand, Nagma (1953), Amar, Darwaza, Shabab (1954), Baradari, Jawab, Sabse Bada Rupaiya, Shahzada, Udan Khatola (1955), Jallad, Awara Shahzadi (1956), Bada Bhai, Mehfil, Mother India (1957), Hathkadi, Sohni Mahiwal, Zindagi Ya Toofan (1958), Zara Bachke (1959), Kohinoor, Mughal-e-Azam, Qatil (1960), Flight to Assam, Ganga Jamuna, Pyar Ki Dastan (1961), Rooplekha, Son of India (1962), Maya Mahal, Mere Mehboob (1963), Leader (1964), Flying Man, Main Hoon Jadugar (1965), Dil Diya Dard Liya, Saaz aur Awaz (1966), Palki, Ram aur Shyam (1967), Aadmi, Sathi, Sanghursh (1968), Ganwaar (1970), Pakeezah (1971), Tangewala (1972), Aaina, Friend (1974), Sunehra Sansar (1975), Chambal Ki Rani (1979), Dharam Kanta (1982), Love & God (1986), Awaaz De Kahan Hai (1990), Teri Payal Mere Geet (1993), Guddu (1995).*



## **L.V. PRASAD**

### **From Oblivion to Prominence**

**A** **KHINEVI** Laksmi Varaprasada Rao better known as L.V. Prasad was born in a family of prosperous agriculturists in a remote village in Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh. His father's name was Akkineni Shrimulu and mother's name was Basavamma.

Acting in films was his cherished dream since early childhood and to realize this he sneaked out of his home, leaving behind his wife and little child. A stint of his career as a gate keeper in a theatre awaited him. This sorry state of affairs made him tough and resolute. He managed to get a job in the Venus Pictures for a pittance. Struggle increased and so did his longing to see his dream fulfilled. His fortune took a brilliant turn when he got work with Imperial Film Company where he was put on the studio payroll working as extra, production manager and assistant cameraman. His performance drew attention of the studio proprietor, Ardeshir Irani. He played a small role in the company's silent movies. When they produced the first Hindi talkie, **Alam Ara**, he had a small part in it and coincidentally worked in the first Tamil talkie and the first Telugu talkie.

After the closure of the Imperial company L.V. Prasad joined Krishna Company as a door keeper but it too closed after a few days. Afterwards he worked as a production manager/camera assistant in the New Era film Company and offered an assistant's job by the famous director H.M. Reddy. He acted in the film **Sathyame Jayam**. Having tasted failure, he refused an offer to direct a film and continued as assistant director.

His first major role was in the Telugu film, **Grihapravesam** in 1946. He churned out many remarkable movies in Telugu, Tamil and Hindi. Some of his outstanding movies are: **Uththamaputhran**, **Padagothi** and **Matharkula Manikkan** (Tamil), **Charan Daasi** and **Paleturu** (Telugu), **Sasural** and **Manohara** (Hindi).

His films were mostly a blend of melodrama, comedy and social values. He realized inherent need of music, dance and songs to make a film palatable and purposeful. He gave break to many stars. He made films in Kannada, Oriya and Bengali also. L.V. Prasad acted in various films such as:



**Bhaktha Prahlad (1931), Chaduvukunna Bhaarya (1940), Barrister Paarvathesam (1940), Bondaam Pelli (1940), Themali Ramakri Shnan (1941), Thimmarsusu (1941), Gharana donga (1942).**

- He directed his first film **Grihapravesam** in 1946.
- He directed the film **Palnati Yuddham** as Sri Ramabrahman died in 1947.
- In 1948 he directed the film **Drohi** and also acted in it.
- **Manadesam** was directed by L.V. Prasad in 1949 in which noted actor N.T. Ramarao played the lead role.
- First film of the Telugu actress **Janaki** was directed by L.V. Prasad in 1950. He also wrote screenplay for the film.
- In 1950 he directed **Samsaaram**, Savithri's first film.
- **Pellicheshi Choodu** in 1952 and **Daasi** in 1952 directed by him were appreciated by filmgoers. After a long stint as a director he reverted to acting with the film **Pempudu Koduku** in 1953. Later he directed **Missamma** in 1955 and **Appuchesi Pappu Koodu** in 1959 (both hilarious comedies)
- **Illalu** directed by him in 1965 introduced Githanjali and R Nageshwara Rao who rose to greater heights in Telugu film industry. His last film as an actor was **Amaavaasya Chandrudu** (1981)

L.V. Prasad entered into the arena of Hindi films with the film **Sharada** in which Meena Kumari and Raj Kapoor played lead roles. This film became a big hit, and set Prasad firmly on the road to greater things.

L.V. Prasad spent all his money in establishing studios. Prasad Productions Ltd. is the largest organization serving the film industry with Prasad Studio (Chennai), Prasad Film Laboratories (Chennai), Prasad Kalinga Film Laboratories (Bhubaneshwar), Prasad Film Laboratories (Noida), Prasad Recording Studio (Chennai), Prasad 70mm Recording Theatre with Dolby SR, Prasad Dubbing Theatre (Hyderabad), Prasad Recording Studio (Bangalore), Prasad Video Digital (Chennai), Prasad Video (Bangalore), Prasad Digiaudio (Bangalore), EFX-Digital Special effects for Motion pictures.

L.V. Prasad established a super specialty hospital in Hyderabad. He also founded an eye care centre at Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad in 1986. The L.V. Prasad Eye Institute (LVPEI) is an excellent eye care institute in Hyderabad and provides utmost eye care to all sections of the society. He also set up a research centre, a rehabilitation centre



and an eye bank for research in vision endangering situations, training eye care workers, product development and rehabilitating the incurable vision disabilities. The institute provides free treatment for the poor people and about 75 to 100 cases of cataract are operated everyday.

The L.V. Prasad Group, a pioneer, in the south Indian film industry for more than 5 decades, has set up the first IMAX theatre which is known as 'Prasad, the Experience' in 2003 in Hyderabad with capacity of 635 seats near NTR Gardens which also consists of a 200,000 sq. ft. shopping arcade and food court. IMAX uses a 15-perforation frame, the largest in motion picture history on a 70 mm format that screens the best of English, Hindi and Telugu films and low budget films. The theatre has been designed according to the international standards in light, sound and volume.

### **Awards & Honours:** He was decorated with various awards

- 'Apara Bheeshma Charya' title for his contributions towards the film industry.
- Chairman of the 27<sup>th</sup> National Film Festival Award Selection Committee (feature films) held at New Delhi in 1980.
- Winner of Filmfare's best award for his film **Khilona** in the year 1970.
- Member of the Board of Film Censors from October 1980 to February 1987.
- Chairman of the All India Selection Panel (Indian Panorama) for the Eighth International Film/Competitive Film festival held in Delhi from January 3 to 17, 1981.
- Udyog Patra award by Shri Hidayatullah, Vice President of India at New Delhi on 20<sup>th</sup> December 1980.
- Chairman of the Studio Owner's Council-a wing of Film Federation of India.
- Raja Sadow Memorial Award for the year 1978-79 by the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, M.G. Ramchandran on 15<sup>th</sup> of August 1991 at Chennai.
- Honoured by the Raghupati Venkayya Award for the year 1980 by Andhra Pradesh Government.
- Kala Sagar and Madras Film Fans Association bestowed honours on LV Prasad on 18<sup>th</sup> October 1981.



- Ramnath Award 82 by Cine Technicians' Association of South India on 5<sup>th</sup> June 1982.
- Elected president of the South Indian Film Chamber of Commerce for the year 1982-83.
- Kala Tapasvi Award by the Popular Telugu Cinema Weekly *Sitara* on 13<sup>th</sup> March 1983 at Hyderabad.
- Kala Prapurna Award by Chancellor Andhra University at Waltair on 21<sup>st</sup> December 1985.
- Andhra Ratna Award by the Andhra Pradesh Kala Devika on 27<sup>th</sup> March 1987 at Hyderabad.
- Dadasaheb Phalke Award in 1982.

L.V. Prasad passed away in 1994.

## Filmography:

*Rani (Dir) (Hindi) (1952), Ilavelpu (Telugu) (1955), Sharada (Dir) (Hindi) (1958), Chhoti Bahen (Dir) (Hindi) (1959), Thayilla Pillai (Tamil) (1960), Sasural (Hindi) (1961), Iruvar Ullam (Tamil) (1962), Hamrahi (Hindi) (1963), Beti Bete (Dir) (Hindi) (1964), Idaya Kamalam (Tamil), Illalu (Telugu) (1965), Daadi Maa (Dir) (Hindi) (1966), Milan (Hindi) (1967), Raja Aur Rank (Hindi) (1968), Jeena Ki Raah (Dir) (1969), Khilona (Hindi) (1970), Thande Makkalu (Kannada) (1971), Shaadi Ke Baad (Dir), Mane Beligida Sosey (Kannada) (1972), Bidaai (Hindi) 1974, Priya Vidai (Tamil) (1975), Udhar Ka Sindur (Hindi) (1976), Jai Vijay (Hindi) (1977), Yeh Kaisa Insaaf (Hindi) (1980), Ek Duje Ke Liye (Hindi) (1981), Mera Ghar Mere Bachche (Hindi) (1984), Swati (Hindi) (1985), Bidai (Bengali) (1991), Aradhana (Malyalam) (1993), Naag Panchami (Bengali), Sandhya Tara (Bengali) (1994), Maayer Kotha (Bengali) Suno Puva (Oriya) (1996).*



# DURGA KHOTE

## Personification of Courage

**A**N amalgamation of director, producer and actor – Durga Khote reigned Indian Acine world for a period of 50 years.

She ventured into the film arena in the era of silent movies. **Farebi Jaal** (1931) was her first silent movie just before the emergence of talkie. Her first talkie film was **Ayodhya Ka Raja** in Hindi and Marathi in the year 1932. Her career span has many brilliant spots – which witnessed her passage from silent films to talkies and wide recognition as one of the greatest actresses of her time. Those days studio system was in vogue. She worked with Prabhat Film Company, Poona, New Theatres and East India (both at Calcutta, now Kolkata), and Prakash Picture. Overcoming conservative mind set of the society, she bulldozed into the realm of the glamour world.

In the year 1937 she produced and directed the feature film **Saathi**. She acted in more than 200 films. Alongwith films she tried her luck in short films, advertisement films and documentaries with tremendous success.

A report in the *Times of India*, 15 March , 1935, reveals that while shooting a film in Kolhapur, Durga Khote averted a tragedy with her amazing courage and presence of mind. The scene involved a number of lions; one got out of control and pounced on an actor, Maruti Rao, and began clawing his shoulder. Durga Khote caught hold of the lion's mane and pulled it hard, incurring bruises on her forearm. Meanwhile, the trainer arrived and with some difficulty succeeded in bringing the lion under control.

Her career reached the zenith of fame with Prabhat Film Comapany's **Amar Jyoti**. She performed magnificently in the title role of **Sita** produced by East India Film Co. at Kolkata. It was directed by the renowned Debaki Kumar Bose, and Prithviraj Kapoor was her co-star.

About **Mughal-e-Azam** experience **Durga Khote** reveals in *From Me*:

*In 1950 when shooting of Mughal-e-Azam was resumed, work begin in earnest.. Tailors were brought from Delhi to stitch the costumes. Hyderabad goldsmiths made the jewellery and Kolhapur craftsmen, the crowns. Ironsmiths from Rajasthan fabricated the shields, swords, spears, daggers and armour while*



*the elaborate footwear was ordered from Agra. Specialists from Surat-Khambayat were employed for the exquisite zardozi embroidery on the costumes. The main stars went to London to be fitted for special wigs. But the Indian climate didn't agree with the foreign wigs. The moment a comb touched them, all the hair began to fall out!!*

Durga Khote took to character roles in the last phase of her career.

## **Awards & Honours:**

She was the Chairperson of the 30<sup>th</sup> Film Festival Jury for short films in 1993. She received National Sangeet Academy Award and was honoured with Padmashree. She was honoured with State Award for **Dhartichi Lokre** (1970), BFJA Filmfare Award for best supporting actress in **Bidai** (1974). Durga Khote received Dadasaheb Phalke Award for the year 1983.

## **Filmography:**

*Trapped, Farebi Jaal (1931), Ayodhya Ka Raja, Maya Machhindra (1932), Patit Pawan, Rajrani Meera (1933), Seeta (1934), After The Earthquake, Jeevan Natak (1935), Amar Jyoti (1936), Kal Ki Baat, Pratibha (1937), Nanda Kumar, Sathi (1938), Adhuri Kahani (1939), Geeta, Narsi Bhagat (1940), Charanon Ki Dasi (1941), Bharat Milap, Vijay (1942), Kurban, Mahasati Ansuya, Mahatma Vidur, Prithvi Vallabh, Tasever, Zamin (1943), Dil Ki Baat, Maharathi Karna (1944), Lakshrani, Pannabai, Phool, Veer Kunal, Village Girl (1945), Dasi Ya Maa, Hum Ek Hain, Maharani Minal Devi, Rukmini Swayamwar (1946), Anjuman, Seeta Swayamvar (1948), Jeet, Maya Bazar, Singaar (1949), Alakh Niranjana, Bekasoor, Bhimsen, Hamara Ghar, Har Har Mahadev, Hindustan Hamara, Magroor, Nishana, Shri Krishna Darshan, Surajmukhi, Veer Bhimsen (1951), Aandhian, Hyderabad Ki Nazneen, Indrasan, Lal Kunwar, Mordhwaj, Sandesh (1952), Anand Bhavan, Chacha Chowdhry, Dharam Patni, Malkin, Mashuqa, Naag Panchami, Naulakha Haar, Shikast, Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu (1954), Laila, Lakeeren, Mirza Ghalib, Ramayan (1955), Adil-a-Jahangir, Haseena, Jagadguru Shakaracharya, Madh Bhare Nain, Shri Ganesh Vivah (1955), Dwarikadhesh, Harihar Bhakti, Insaaf, Parivar, Patranil, Rajdhani (1956), Bade Sarkar, Bhabhi, Mera Salaam, Musafir, Ram Hanuman Yuddha, Talash (1957), Gopichand, Raj Tilak (1958), Ardhangini, Ghar Ghar Ki Baat, Maine Jeena Seekh Liya (1959), Love in Simla, Mughal-e-Azam, Parakh, Usne Kaha Tha (1960), Bhabhi ki Chudiyen, Do Bhai, Ek Ladki Saat Ladke, Kismet Palat Ke Dekh, Senapati (1961), Main Shadi Karne Chala, Manmauji, Rangoli (1962), Mujhe Jeene Do, The Householder (1963), Benazir, Door Ki Awaz, Kaise Kahoon, Tere Dwar Khada Bhagwan (1964), Do dil, Janam Janam ke Sathi, Kaajal, Purnima (1965), Anupama, Dadi Maa, Devar, Pyar Mohabbat, Sagai (1966), Chandan Ka Palna (1967), Jhuk Gaya Asmaan, Sapnon Ka Saudagar, Sanghursh (1968), Dharti Kahe Pukar Ke, Ek*



*Phool Do Mali, Jeene Ki Raah, Mera Dost, Pyar Ka Sapna (1969), Gopi, Khilona, Umang (1970), Banphool, Ek Nari Ek Brahmchari (1971), Bawarchi, Mangetar, Mere Bhaiya, Raja Jani, Shararat (1972), Agni Rekha, Bobby, Paanch Dushman, Sone Ke Haath (1973), Bidai, Dil Deewana, Insaniyat (1974), Biwi Kiraye Ki, Chaitali, Do Thug, Kala Sona, Khushboo, Vandana (1975), Jai Bajrang Bali, Janeman, Rangila Rattan, Shaque (1976), Chacha Bhatija, Chor Sipahi, Darling Darling, Do Chehere, Naami Chor, Paapi, Paheli, Saheb Bahadur (1977).*



# SATYAJIT RAY

## Ray Of Inspiration

**S**ATYAJIT Ray (popularly known as Manikda) was born on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1921 in one of the Brahmo families of Calcutta. Having matriculated in 1936 he went to acquire a degree in Economics from Calcutta's Presidency College in 1940. He studied fine arts under the celebrated painter Nandlal Bose during his 3 year stay at Viswabharati University at Santiniketan.

Satyajit Ray, a visualiser in 1943 in a British Advertising Company, graduated to the art director by 1950. On his visit to London and his four and half month stay there made him interested in films and during his stay there he saw around 100 films. In 1948 he played a pivotal role in founding Calcutta Film Society. He was made president of this Society for a number of years during which he rendered whole hearted services to spread film culture through the film society movement. Ray's interest in Cinema started blossoming into a compulsive passion with his advancing age as he found himself nestled in the creative ambience and his talent flourished luxuriantly.

On his voyage back to India from London he started working on the scripts of **Pather Panchali**. Subsequently, the film was launched through the generous financial support from friends, but it proved insufficient. The then Chief Minister of West Bengal Dr. B.C.Roy, a close friend of the film maker, provided him with Government finance which enabled him to complete the film. This film brought him instant and tremendous acclaim and established him as master craftsman in Indian as well as in international arena. It was screened at the 9<sup>th</sup> International Film Festival at Cannes and its director was recognized as one of the greatest film makers of the day and the film was acclaimed as the Best Human Document of the year (1950).

About the craft of Satyajit Ray another legendary film maker Ritwik Ghatak writes in *Filmfare*:

*In Pather Panchali you hear the same tune again and again that was the theme music for the film. Anywhere, anytime you hear that tune, it will remind you of the endless greenness of Bengal's villages. In Aparajito, Sarbojaya and Apu are returning to the village from Benares; the train leaves the bridge behind; soon through the windows one can see the landscape of Bengal, green and beautiful. Just then on the sound track you hear that theme tune. Just once for*



*the whole length of the film, but once was enough. A comment is made, there's a correlative established between the past and present, your mind is flooded with the memories of Nischintpur (the village of Apu and Durga) and the white cotton fields.*

Over the years pouring in of National and International awards stands testimony to his growing reputation and critics rated him one among the handful of great living directors and the **Apu Trilogy** (**Pather Panchali**, **Aparajito** and **Apur Sansar**) set the seal upon his international fame. In the New York Times, Bosley Crowther wrote:

*The fulfillment of the Apu Trilogy honours the screens – such was the magic of the film that at no point they seem forced – rather an easy, natural flow marks the progression of one film into another. The brilliant performances by Soumitra Chatterjee as the adult Apu and Sharmila Tagore as Aparna are among the best ever on screen.*

Bibhuti Bhushan Banerjee's novel **Pather Panchali** provided basis for the Apu trilogy. Different facets, humanism, lyricism, a reflection of class and states of mind have their due share in its stunning success.

### Pather Panchali (1955)

It is Ray's masterpiece set in pre industrialization village (Nischintpur i.e. a place of no worry). Father leaves for a city in search of employment. His wife and children are left behind. In a gay abandon the girl, after a joyous dance, catches pneumonia, which sets her in eternal rest. The whole family moves to Benaras after this tragedy. The mother endures and masks her agony, father wallows in self-pity while the boy Apu looks to the future with fear and curiosity.

Direction, photography and performances are well synchronized to deliver an optimum effect and this well crafted synchronization has made this one of the most renowned films of India. Picturisation of the monsoon rains – gentle beginning- turning into rather destructive and finally storm synchronize well with the daughter's dance in gay abandon, followed by her catching pneumonia and subsequent death. There was no script for the film- just a series of wash drawings by Ray in a Sketch book now with the Cinematheque Francaise in Paris.

The film won the prize for the "Best human document at the Cannes Film Festival in 1956.

Veteran actor Ashok Kumar pays glowing tribute to Satyajit Ray and his mastery over the craft of film making in Illustrated Weekly of India:

*I have worked with the best directors – Nitin Bose, Bimal Roy, Hrishikesh Mukherjee.. The important point is that, from even the humblest of directors.*



*I have learnt something. Still no one's impressed me so much as Satyajit Ray. I've yet to work with him. But whenever I see a Ray film, I cannot but exclaim: 'Now why in the world didn't I think of that little trick-it's so simple'. The great thing about Ray is that he always seems to be one jump ahead of other film-makers where innovations are concerned. I'd like to do a film with him, if only because he's so full of directorial surprise even for an artiste like me who likes to think he's seen it all in a career spanning four decades.*

### Aparajito (1956)

Story of Pather Panchali continues – Father dies and the mother for the sake of her son takes shelter with one of her relatives under compelling circumstances. Unlike his priest father the growing child Apu prefers to study and later to live in the city. His mother leaves for her heavenly abode while he studies and works in Calcutta.

The train journey from Benaras to the village is accompanied briefly by the theme of **Pather Panchali**, and memories surface. This film was the first to employ bounce lighting – pioneered by Subrata Mitra.

The film explores the Mother-son relationship. This film is a realistic presentation of relationship which became a bit unpalatable to the viewers and it was an initial failure in India but critical acclaim reversed this. It won the Lionne d'ore at the Venice film festival.

### Apur Sansar (1959)

This is the third film of Apu trilogy. It depicts Apu's marriage to his friend's sister. Their love and joy know no bounds. Aparna's death after child birth, Apu's initial rejection and ultimate acceptance of his son Kajal brings to mind the child Apu and the story comes full circle.

Before completing the third part of the trilogy, he made two other films **Paras Pathar** (1957) – an ironic whimsy about a poor Bengali fellow having a touchstone which turn base metals into gold. Another film **Jalsagar** (1958) is the story of a near bankrupt landlord living amidst the decaying feudal pride and memories of the bygone splendour. After Apu trilogy he made **Devi** (1960) a depiction of a tragic fate of a victim of superstition. He also made a 50 minute long documentary film on Rabindranath followed by '**Teen Kanya**' (1961) based on three stories.

**Kanchanjunga** (1962) – was the next film.

**Abhijaan** (1962) – It depicts the position of a woman in the upper echelon of the society. It deals with the status of a woman in the family with its hidebound views – painfully declaring her right to help out the family.



**Charulata** (1964) – Based on the novel written by Rabindranath Tagore it depicts the tragic tale of a woman's extramarital love. This is cited by many critics as his masterpiece. Subsequent film was the twosome '**Kapurush-o-Mahapurush**' (1965) which vividly depicts the life of a coward person belonging to the middle class society.

**Nayak** (1966) – Uttam Kumar in the lead role, the film examines torments of the means and the mask existence of a matinee idol.

**Chiriakhana** (1967) is a detective movie based on the story of a novelist Saradindu Banerjee.

**Gopy Gyne Bagha Byne** (1968), was more of a musical based on a story by Upendra Kishore Roy.

**Aranyer Din Ratri** (1969) – Depicts the relationship among four young men when they go out of Kolkata for a few days to holiday in the rain forests on Bengal-Bihar border.

**Pratidhwani** (1970) **Seema baddha** (1971) and **Jan Aranya** viewed as trilogy on contemporary India. It probes and describes the frustration of the educated unemployed youth, the amorality and their quest for pleasure, the erosion and corruption of values and firecely competitive modern world.

**Ashani Sanket** (1973) It is a film based on the forewarding signals of disaster of famine. The next film the **Inner eye** (1974) which was a film on the blind painter Benod Behary Mukherjee is an example of transition from the grimness of mass tragedy to serenity of the humanism.

**Sonar Kella** (1975) based on the explicit story of 'Feluda' series character created by Ray was shot in Rajasthan. Another documentary film **Bala** (1976) was based on the Bharatnatyam dancer Bala Saraswati in 1976.

He made another film named '**Joy Baba Felunath**' (1978) – a series of detective stories of 'Feluda' created by him.

**Hirak Rajar Deshe** made in 1980 is a musical movie. In 1980 he made a short telefilm **Pikoo**. He also made **Ghare Baire** in 1984.

About Ray's technical fineese, Khalid Mohammed writes in *Illustrated Weekly of India*:

*The film Shatranj Ke Khilari opens with hands moving the pieces on the shatranj cloth according to the native set of rules and ends with a freeze – the game now has to be played according to the rules dictated by the colonizing power... The colours are gorgeous and so is the lighting like a*



*splendid son-et-lumiere show. At least two shots lining my mind like favourable lines of poetry. One is masterful scene done deep scarlet and black on a close-up of Wajid Ali Shah as the sun sets on his Kingdom. The second is an equally stylized sequence, in shaded brown light, showing the exchanging between the Queen Mother and General Outram as negotiation begins or Oudh's annexation.*

### Awards & Honours:

Year	Film	Award
1992		Oscar for Lifetime Achievement (UsA)
1992		Bharat Ratna (India's Highest Civilian Award)
1991	Agantuk	National Award Best Film (India)
1991	Agantuk	National Award Best Director (India)
1985		Dada Saheb Phalke Award (India)
1975	Shatranj Ke Khiladi	Filmfare Award Best Director (India)
1977	Shatranj Ke Khiladi	Filmfare Critics' Award Best Film (India)
1977	Shatranj Ke Khiladi	National Award Best Regional (Hindi) Feature Film (India)
1976		Padma Vibhushan (India's Second Highest Civilian Award)
1975	Jana Aranya	National Award Best Director (India)
1974	Sonar Kella	National Award Best Director (India)
1973	Asani Sanket	National Award President's Gold Medal (India)
1971	Seemabaddha	National Award President's Gold Medal (India)
1968	Goopy Gyne Bagha Byne	National Award President's Gold Medal (India)
1966	Nayak	National Award Best Screenplay & Story (India)
1965		Padma Bhushan (India's Third Highest Civilian Award)
1964	Charulata	National Award President's Gold Medal (India)
1962	Abhijan	National Award President's Silver Medal (India)
1961	Rabindranath Tagore (Documentary Film)	National Award President's Gold Medal (India)
1961	Teen Kanya	National Award President's Silver Medal (India)
1960	Devi	National Award President's Gold Medal (USA)
1959	Apur Sansar	National Board of Review Best Foreign Film (USA)



Year	Film	Award
1959	Apur Sansar	National Award President's Gold Medal (India)
1958	Jalsagar	National Award President's Silver Medal (India)
1958		Padmashree (India's Fourth Highest Civilian Award)
1957	Aparajito	Golden Lion Venice Film Festival (Italy)
1956	Pather Panchali	Cannes Best Human Document (France)
1955	Pather Panchali	National Award President's Gold Medal (India)

### Filmography:

*Pather Panchali (1955), Aparajitho (1956), Parash Pathar (1957), Jalsagar (1958), Apur Sansar (1959), Devi (1960), Teen Kanya, Rabindranath Tagore (1961), Kanchanjunga, Abhijaan (1962), Mahanagar (1963), Charulata, Teen Kanya (1964), Kapurush-O-Mahapurush (1965), Nayak (1966), Chiriakhana (1967), Gopi Gyne Bagha Byne (1969), Aranyer Din Ratri, Pratidwandi (1970), Seemabaddha, Sikkim (1971), Jai Baba Felunath (1978), Hirak Rajar Deshe, Pikoo (Telefilm) (1980), Sadgati (Telefilm) (1981), Ghare Baire (1984), Sukumar Ray (1987), Ganshatru (1989), Shakha Prashakha (1990).*

Noted Actress Simi Garewal pays tributes to Ray in the following words:

*"I was worried about my dialogues for "Aranyer Din Ratri", so Manikda ave me the words for my first scene which shows a Santhal girl drinking at a bhati khana. She sees some city people and asks them for money to have some more drinks. The first three nights we kept mixing with the Santhals in the forest of Palamau, to see how they moved and walked and talked. On the night before we were there with Ray. As soon as our group walked in, one particular Santhal woman saw us through her drunken haze, realized we were city people and came to us. Believe it or not, she spoke exactly the same dialogue that Manikada had given me in Calcutta and I just looked at him in shock! He merely smiled"*



## V. SHANTARAM

### Film Maker Par Excellence

**R**AJARAM Vankudre Shantaram better known as V. Shantaram, was born in Kolhapur (Maharashtra) on 18<sup>th</sup> November 1901 in a poor family which could not afford his basic education. He earned his livelihood in a railroad repair and maintenance workshop. At that time Kolhapur was brimming with pioneering theatrical productions which provided a strong platform to Shantaram and as a result he incidentally and instinctively joined the Gandharva Natak Mandali. (A company of legendary dancer and singer Bal Gandharva) in 1914-15 where he was trained by eminent musicologist Govind Rao Tembe and tabla master Tirakhwan whom he later employed in his own company. Opening to cinema world was provided by Kolhapur film company (Maharashtra). This Company was owned by Babu Rao Painter, one of the great pioneers of Indian cinema. His initial job was of a mere studio hand.

His career span was full of struggle and in order to make his both ends meet he worked as a coolie, carpenter, make-up man to editor and on to become an actor. He got exposure to various crafts employed in film making. He assisted Baburao Painter and enacted small characters in **Surekha Haran** (1921), **Damaji** (1921) and **Maya Bazar** (1923). He enacted first major role in the silent movie **Sinhagad** (1923) followed by **Shri Krishna Avtar** and **Sati Padmini** (1924) and **Savkari Pash** (1924) – an intense study of money lending. Later he acted in their sound versions as well. Shantaram's training in Maharashtra Film Company as an actor and as cine artist stood him in good stead in later days. He made his directorial debut with **Netaji Palkar** in 1927.

V. Shantaram recalls making of **Dr. Kotnis ki Amar Kahani**:

*I wanted as many people as possible to learn of the wonderful story of Dr. Kotnis and so I decided to make the film also in English. I wrote to Pandit Nehru who was then in jail, 'I seek your blessings for a film I am producing on the life of a selfless doctor who at your request volunteered to be a part of the team sent to China'. I sent similar letters to other national leaders but only Vijayalaxmi Pandit replied from Ahmednagar jail. Gandhi's Secretary sent me a one-line post card, 'Don't harass the Mahatma with request for blessings for such work'. The film was a box-office success all over India and I was keen*



*that Prime Minister Pandit Nehru should inaugurate it in Delhi as Dr. Kotnis had gone to China at his behest and sacrificed his life... My Delhi distributor told me that Panditji's Secretary had sent a message that the Prime Minister would not accede to my request as I was exploiting his name for commercial gain. I had not expected such a response. Surely my name was enough to ensure the film's commercial success*

He alongwith his three partners, V.G. Dhamle, K.R. Dhaibar, S. Fattelal decided to launch a company which took a concrete shape in the form of Prabhat Company on June 1, 1929 in Kolhapur and a little later another partner. S.K. Kulkarni (a gold smith) joined them and for next 13 years Prabhat Studios produced many memorable films mostly directed by V. Shantaram and this established Shantaram's style (innovative camera movements and an ensemble like arrangement of group scenes). Shantaram has many first to his credit:

- First children's film **Ranisaheba** in 1930. First use of a camera trolley in 1931, for the silent film **Chandrasena**. First Marathi talkie **Ayodhyecha Raja** in 1932.
- The First colour film **Sairandhri** in 1933.
- Production of gramophone records from the original sound track in 1934.
- Use of telephoto lens for **Amrit Manthan** in 1955.
- First animation film **Jambukaka** in 1936, and the first time use of back projection for **Amar Jyoti** in 1937.

While making **Sairandhri** in colour (This had earlier been filmed by Painter), he went to Germany for processing it. But the results were not satisfactory. There he was face to face with Nazi organization and propaganda and some of the leading German directors Pabst, Long and others and learnt much from them. On his return from Germany he built a modern, spacious studio with mountain scenery, marshland, soundproof recording, editing and shooting studios. **Amrit Manthan** set in the Buddhist period was the first film there. This depicted the tension between Buddhism and established religious creeds. All those new techniques he had picked up in Europe equipped him for innovations in the camera use. **Amrit Manthan** won him twin accolades as a person with social conscience and a remarkable director.

His notable films in 1935 were **Chandrasena** and **Dharmatma** (Hindi/Marathi/Tamil). The film **Dharmatma** was based on the life of the Marathi saint Eknath who preached against untouchability

Shantaram's concern for the ills of Indian society in general and the plight of women in particular – gave Prabhat an orientation towards contemporary themes. Films **Amar Jyoti**, **Duniya Na Mane** and **Aadmi** was a trilogy developed around the oppression against women.



**Amar Jyoti** filmed in 1935 dealt with the prevalent attitudes towards women. This film received a certificate of merit at the Venice Film Festival in 1936 and brought him to the center stage in International film arena.

**Duniya Na Mane** (1939) was based on a novel published by Apte in the 1920s and had caused a great stir because it questioned the institution of arranged marriages. Devoid of any background music, everyday noise provided the replacement for it and old clock symbolizes age, life and death. It was a big success.

**Aadmi** or **Maanoos**, its Marathi version is regarded by many as the finest film Shantaram ever made. This film was shot entirely on the sets, using mainly street corners, corridors etc. and relied mostly on right shots and extensive use of shadows.

**Padosi** (1941) was Shantaram's last film for Prabhat. This is one of the most celebrated social films ever made in India exposing the cause of social, and especially, communal harmony at a time when the country was passing through a phase of extreme disharmony and social upheavals.

Around the outbreak of second world war, the Government of India set up Film Advisory Board. Shantaram became the first Indian to head the Films Division. **Handicrafts of India, Our Heritage** and a film about Sino-Japan war were some of the notable films. 'Do or die' fervour of the Quit India movement prompted his resignation from the Government post as it had become increasingly difficult for him to suppress nationalistic expressions and appease the colonial rulers at the same time.

Shantaram bought land, studio and remaining assets of the quickly declining Wadia Movietone at Bombay and set up his Rajkamal Kala Mandir there. It was a film producing company actively functioning right upto 1990s and thereafter became a professional shooting studio.

His first film for this company was based on Kalidas's classic **Shakuntala** and it was a tremendous success. He married its heroine retaining his first wife. **Shakuntala** was the first Indian film to be released commercially in the U.S.

After this he made one of his most memorable pre-war films, **Dr. Kotnis Ki Amar Kahani** (1946) based on Abbas' story. He played the lead role of Dr. Kotnis. His wife Jayshree enacted the Chinese nurse Clinglan. This film is a story of a young Indian doctor Dwarkanath Kotnis, who was a member of an Indian team of eight war doctors, sponsored by Nehru, and gone to China on a humanitarian mission when there was a massive tripartite war going on in that country. The film was a huge success in India but English version proved to be almost a non-entity.

The war shook the studio system of film production in India. Star system started to dominate and directors found themselves thrown backstage. But Shantaram could



successfully arrested this reversal because he himself and his wife acted in the films. Alongwith Mehboob Studios and R.K. Studios, Rajkamal struggled to maintain the dual role of a studio and a production Centre. Shantaram's Rajkamal Kalamandir had its studio and its own laboratory.

Shantaram's films after Independence depicted anti-colonial nationalism and picturized country's sad conditions especially poverty and unemployment.

Next spate of a trilogy based on social issues- started with **Apna Desh** (1949) based on black marketing, **Surang** (1953) showed the plight of quarry workers working underground under dangerous conditions and a constant risk to life. Then came **Teen Batti Char Rasta** advocating harmony between different regions and states of India coming in the backdrop of furious linguistic movements in the South. After this Shantaram came out with a marvelous dance drama **Chitrlekha** and called it **Jhanak Jhanak Payal Baaje** (1955). The film portrayed the clash between Indian and Western art forms and seemed to argue that India must preserve the purity of her timeless and eternal artistic traditions and not be easily influenced by transitory western fashion which would corrupt it. This film won the President's Gold Medal. Similar to **Jhanak Jhanak Payal Baaje** other films like **Navrang** (1959), **Sehra** (1963) and **Jal Bin Machchli Nritya Bin Bijli** (1971) were dance extravaganzas closely connected to the classical forms. The actress-dancer Sandhya was the star in these films. An accomplished dancer, she brought the most complicated dances to the audiences in an effortless manner.

**Do Aankhein Baraah Haath**(1957) is on prison reforms. Shantaram enacts an idealistic jailor who attempts to reform half-a dozen die-hard criminals by conducting a unique experiment on them, letting them farm on a patch of land. Punctuated by highly dramatic moments the film had enough substance to win the Samuel Goldwyn Award from the Hollywood Press Association, a rare honour for an Indian film maker.

**Awards & Honours:** Shantaram's films gathered many national and international awards.

- **Amar Jyoti** (1936) received a certificate of Merit at the Venice film festival.
- **Amar Bhoopali** was named for Best sound recording from the Center National de La Cinematographic, at the Cannes film festival in 1952.
- **Do Aankhein Baraah Haath** was Shantaram's crowning glory. It won awards from Hollywood Press Association, Berlin Film Festival and His Holiness the Pope's Catholic Award. It was named Best Film of 1957 at the National Film Awards.



- **Shera and Geet Gaya Pathron ne** were awarded for colour photography.
- Shantaram won Filmfare Award 1956 for best direction in his film **Jhanak Jhanak Payal Baaje**.
- He got BFJA award as Best director for the film **Parbat Pe Apna dera**.
- **Jhunj** won the Maharashtra State Award for best editing in 1975.
- Received Dadasaheb Phalke Award in 1986.
- Received Padmabhushan in 1992.

Central Government, Maharashtra State Government and V. Shantaram Motion Picture Scientific Research and Cultural Foundation established in 1993 shortly after his death offer awards to film makers on 18<sup>th</sup> November each year on his birth anniversary. Shantaram was closely associated with various film institutions. He was a member of the Film Advisory Board and Central Board of Film Censors. He was the founder President of the Film Producers' Guild of India, member of the S.K. Patil Film Inquiry Committee, and founder member of the Children's Film Society.

Shantaram continued to direct films for seventy years, an unprecedented record for a director anywhere in the world. He has made many outstanding contributions to the development and enrichment of Indian cinema with socially purposeful films. He was a pioneer to the core, crusader and master craftsman. His films speak of his directorial excellence, technical advancement, and artistic and cultural values. He experimented boldly with techniques and themes.

V. Shantaram passed away on 30<sup>th</sup> October 1990 at the age of 89. He has seen and performed in all the eras of the Indian Film. The journey of film-making continues ever onwards and the aura of V. Shantaram lingers on.



## **B. NAGI REDDI**

### **Film Maker of the Masses**

**B** NAGI Reddi, noted film producer who was – honoured with Dadasaheb Phalke Award for the year 1986 was born at Pottimpadu, a small village in the district of Cuddapah in Andhra Pradesh on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 1912. He was educated at Madras and whilst still in school he became involved with the freedom movement being inspired by leaders like Kashinathuni Nageshwara Rao and Tanguturi Prakasam. He started looking after his family business when he was 18 and married in 1933. He started getting attracted to the film industry after meeting the people who came to visit his brother. B.N. Reddy.

B.N. Reddy invested some money when H.M. Reddy was making the film **Grahalakshmi** under Rohini banner. While making that film Nagireddy got in touch with Muttuswamy Iyer, Chittor V. Nagayya and Samudrala. **Grahalakshmi** was released in 1938 and after that B.N. Reddy started his own banner Vauhini. B. Nagi Reddy joined as a partner in that alongwith K.V. Reddy, Lingamurthy, Mula Narayana Swami. That film was a success and brought laurels to them. Then they started **Sumangali**.

In 1941 during the World War II the ship carrying the shipment of Nagi Reddy was bombed, and they incurred a huge loss. He went back to his village Ormapadu after this mishap. Later when K.V. Reddy started **Bhakta Potana** he asked Nagireddy to come and look after the publicity of the film. They planned a huge publicity campaign against the competition from Gemini Studios' new film: **Balanagamma**. He was rewarded with Rs. 500 for his successful publicity campaign which he invested in buying an Austin car. Meanwhile he started a small printing press.

While making the film **Swargaseema** he met Chakrapani who was a dialogue writer for that film. Nagi Reddy printed the translations of the work of famous Bengali writer Sarat Babu done by Chakrapani – When Chakrapani's family moved to Madras they stayed in the same house. They started **Andhrajyothi** monthly in 1949 with Jagralamudi Kuppuswamy Chowdary's financial help. Because of the monthly he started interacting with many literary figures.



At Chakrapani's request, he started *Chandamama* in 1947 in both Telugu and Tamil, which became a very popular children's magazine. Now *Chandamama* is published in 13 national languages.

Under the Vidya banner they made **Shavukaru**. The film had NTR, Janaki and S.V. Rangarao in lead role. They were all monthly paid artists at that time. The film was directed by L.V. Prasad. It was not a commercial success.

After that commercial failure they went to make a film for masses. They started **Patalbhairavi** based on Allauddin story from Arabian Nights. The film was directed by K.V. Reddy with NTR, SVR and Malathi in the lead roles. The film was released on 15<sup>th</sup> March 1951. It was a huge success. The film was later made in Hindi and Tamil languages.

Their third film **Pelli Chesu Cudu** starring NTR, G. Varalakshmi, and Savitri was another hit.

Fourth film **Chandraharam** introduced Kamlakar Kamleshwara Rao as director and had NTR Srirangani and Savitri in lead roles. It failed at the box office.

Fifth film **Missamma** was a big hit under the direction of L.V. Prasad, with NTR, ANR, SVR, Savitri and Jamuna. Then came their sixth and the greatest film in Telugu film history **Mayabazar** (1957) under the direction of K.V. Reddy. The film is a brilliant example of perfect screenplay and script.

Their seventh venture was **Appuchesi Pappu Kudu** which was also a big hit. Then they made the film **CID** under the direction of Tapi Chanakya.

Besides these films under Vijaya banner they made **Jagadeka Viruni Katha**, **Sathya Harishchandra**, **Uma Chandi**, **Gauri Sankarula Katha**, **Ganga Manga**, **Sri Raj Rajeswari Vilas**, **Coffee Club** etc. They also made films in Tamil (**Patalabhairvi**, **Kalyanam Panni Paar**, **Chandraharam**, **Missamma**, **Mayabazar**, **Gundamma Katha**, **Engaveetipillai**). Hindi (**Patalbhairavi**, **Miss Mary**, **Ram aur Shyam**, **Julie**) and also in Sinhalese.

Nagi Reddy directed the Tamil version of **Gundamma Katha**, which is 100<sup>th</sup> film for Nageswara Rao. He also directed the Tamil version of **Ramudu – Bhimudu** in Tamil (**Engaveetu Pillai**).

## Awards & Honours:

- He worked as Chairman of All India film Federation.
- Felicitated with honorary doctorate from Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati.
- Awarded Raghupati Venkayya Award by Andhra Pradesh government in 1981



## Filmography:

*Savukaru (Telugu) (1950), Patalbhairavi (Tamil/Telugu) (1951), Kalyanam Panni Par (Tamil), Pellicheshi Choodu (Telugu) (1952), Chandraharam (Telugu) (1953), Chandraharam (Tamil) (1954), Missiamma (Tamil/Telugu/ Kannada), Gunasundari (Telugu) (1955), Maya Bazar (Tamil/Telugu) (1957), Appuchesi Pappukodu (Telugu), Kadan Vangi Kalyanam (Tamil) (1958), Rechukka Pagatichukka (Telugu) (1959), Jagadekha Veeruni Katha (Telugu/Kannada) (1961), Manithan Maravillai (Tamil) Gundamma Katha (Telgu) (1962), Jagathala Prathaban (1962), Sathya Harishchandra (Telugu//Kannada), C.I.D. (Telugu), Enga Veetu Pillai (Tamil), Enga Veetu Penn (Tamil), Madhuvimadi Noodu (Kannada) (1965), Ram Aur Shyam (Hindi) (1967), Uma Chandi Gouri, Sankarula Katha (Telugu), Pappallosam (Telugu), Kuzhandakaga (Tamil) (1968), Nanha Farishta (Hindi) (1969), Ghar Ghar Ki Kahani (Hindi), Drohi (Telugu), Namma Kuzhandaigal (Tamil) (1970), Vasantha Maligai (Tamil) (1972), Thirumangalam (Tamil), Ganga Manga (Telugu) (1973), Vani Rani (Tamil) (1974), Julie (1975), Raja Rajeswari, Coffee Club (Telugu) (1976), Savasagallu (Telugu), Yehi Hai Zindagi (Hindi) (1977) Swayamvar (Hindi) (1980), Shriman Shrimati (1982).*



# RAJ KAPOOR

## The Great Showman

**A** SEAMLESS blending of producer, director and actor finds its fullest and optimum expression in Raj Kapoor who was born in a town called Samandru in Peshawar (now in Pakistan) on December 14, 1924. His father Prithviraj Kapoor was an eminent and established actor and it was natural for Raj Kapoor to gravitate towards the film world.

Raj Kapoor was a clapper boy and used to assist Kidar Sharma. He got his first opportunity to act in a film at the age of eleven. A film **Neelkamal** by Kidar Sharma gave him his prominent break as a hero in 1947. In 1948 he established his studio R.K. Films at the age of 24. His first feature film was **Aag**. It is the story of a man who get sucked strongly in the vortex of theatre. Raj Kapoor vividly tries to portray many events of his life – confrontations with his father Prithiviraj Kapoor about cutting short his studies to pursue his career in film-world and his futile love for three women in his life, played by Kamini Kaushal, Nargis and Nigar Sultana. Though not a commercial success, the film brought forth his talent and strengthened his position.

His second directorial venture **Barsaat** was a box office hit and brought him roaring acclaim. Innovatively melodious music contributed in making this film a success. Successful music directors Shankar and Jaikishan and the lyricists Shailendra and Harsat Jaipuri were introduced in this film. Nimmi and Premnath made their debut in **Barsaat**. Kashmir was used as a backdrop.

Mehboob Khan's film **Andaz** (1949) – enactment of triangular love by Raj Kapoor, Dilip Kumar and Nargis – was widely acclaimed for lively performances and powerful music and brought Raj Kapoor wide recognition as an actor.

Concept for his subsequent film **Awara** was given by K. Abbas. The film received world wide appreciation. In **Awara** Raj Kapoor enacted the role of a slum dweller, uneducated and unrefined in his demeanour. He introduces himself to the people with the tile song of the film '*Awara Hoon...*' Chaplin like character portrayed by Raj Kapoor became widely popular. Its scintillating success gave him the identity of a tramp and many of his later films like **Sri 420**, **Jagte Raho**, **Jis Desh Mein Ganga Behti Hai** and **Mera Naam Joker** feature this trademark character.

In **Sri 420** Raj Kapoor is an unemployed graduate characterized by the song '*Mera Joota hai Japani*'. Full of hope he leaves his village and finds to his horror and



contrary to his expectations that there was no honest way of leading a quality life and temptation leads him astray and he gets trapped in the vices of city life and tries to outsmart city wolves but in the end he is saved by his beloved, symbolically named Vidya or learning with whom he walks away into the sunset.

**Jagte Raho** (1956) – was the story of the native man in the big, bad world. This film was written and directed by Shombhu Mitra and won the Grand Prix at the Karlovy Vary film festival in 1957. The film unfolds at midnight in Calcutta's posh residential area where a city lad is seen looking for drinking water. Seeing a dripping tap he enters the compound. As he is about to drink an alarm is set off. In his desperate efforts to escape his pursuers who take him for a thief he enters a building, rushes up a stairway and stumbles into a room where he witnesses all sorts of goings-on.

The theme of **Jis Desh Mein Ganga Behti Hai** (1960) got its inspiration from the deeds of Vinoba Bhave, who had appealed to the dacoits of Central India to surrender and consequent upon whose request they had responded positively. Here the "tramp" – a ballad singer, lands in the midst of the dacoits – a terror in the neighbouring villages and the bandits. Theme of the film was somewhat deteriorated and diluted due to bathing scenes under waterfalls by Padmini (heroine in the film). Raj Kapoor called this "icing and ornamentation" while critics labeled it voyeurism. However, the film was a box office hit. This movie has a string of beautiful songs.

In 1964 Raj Kapoor produced, directed and acted in his super production '**Sangam**'.

Here Raj Kapoor is in his new incarnation leaving behind his rustic, rural and unrefined enaction. Major part of the film was shot in Europe. It was in technicolour and on locations as varied as London, Paris, Venice and Switzerland. It depicted love triangle between the characters enacted by Raj Kapoor, Rajendra Kumar and Vajayantimala. Here one friend married to her shoots himself to make way for his friend. Hit songs were (*Bol Radha Bol, Dost Dost Na Raha, Yeh Mera Prem Patra etc.*). This film was a grand success.

Six years later he made an autobiographical film **Mera Naam Joker**. This was Raj Kapoor's most ambitious and lengthy production (4 hours, 15 minutes). He brought to India an entire Russian circus and the Bolshoi ballerina Kriena Rabinkina, to star in the film written by K.A. Abbas. The film is structured in three chapters about a joker's last performance. The three women who have played significant role in his life are among the audience. In flashback, we see the struggle and sorrow of the clown's life. This film lacked a clear and coherent narrative. It failed miserably to appease the masses. His role was also unpalatable as he was too old for that. This production became a victim of its own ambition, and its rejection by the audience



severely affected Raj Kapoor. Its failure reversed his fortunes but he could withstand the shock of failure and the test of time and managed to emerge with a renewed vigour.

Raj Kapoor listened to the opinion of people about his work and attuned to the masses from the very beginning. In the making of **Ram Teri Ganga Maili** he explored the mass desire about its climax and acted accordingly to its grand success. Sometimes he used his own vision contradicting the suggestions by critics and to his critics surprise emerged with phenomenal success as he very well knew the pulse of the people.

Kidar Sharma remembers Raj Kapoor's initiation to films:

*At the request of my friend, Prithviraj, I took on Raj Kapoor as a clapper boy for Vish Kanya. When I said, 'One Second please', he combed his hair, posed for the frame and then gave the clap! He'd do this every time. One day I wanted to take a close-up shot just as the sun was going down. With folded hands I requested Raj not to comb his hair or pose for the shot before the clap that day as I didn't want to miss the sunset or else we'd have to return 40-50 miles the following day. He agreed, but again he combed his hair, posed, and when he gave the clap, the hero's beard got caught in the clapper board and we lost the shot. I called him and before the entire unit, I slapped him. He kept quiet. That night I felt very bad and I realized that actually Raj wanted to face the camera while I wanted him behind it! I cast him as the hero opposite another newcomer, Madhubala, in Neel Kamal. Years later, he was presiding at the graduation at Poona Film Institute. Pointing to me, he said 'There's my institute, a one-man institution that taught me all I know about films!'*

Raj Kapoor and script writer Abbas made up their mind to enter into a new experiment of making films which could capture the attention and imagination of the younger generation. This culminated in the making of the film **Bobby** (1973) which proved to be an instant success.

Five years later Raj Kapoor produced and directed **Satyam Shivam Sundaram** banking on the theme of sublimeness of inner human beauty and showered with the sincerity of emotions.

Film critic Bunny Reuben reveals the reason behind the success of the music of **Satyam Shivam Sundaram**:

*In an unprecedented break from tradition Raj Kapoor issued one-third of the music of his magnum opus Satyam Shivam Sundaram a year before the completion of the shooting. And the music clicked! Scarcely were the EPs of the initial recordings of the melodies of the movie released by the Gramophone company of India when they got sold out, literally in thousands. A family*



*returning from the holy place of Shirdi, a few months later reported that the religious melodies of the film, the theme-song, the aarti and the bhajan, all were played throughout the day on loudspeaker in that religious township, as regular religious songs.*

In 1982 he produced and directed **Prem Rog** depicting the pathetic condition of widows, their re-marriage and their constant subjugation.

In 1985, Raj Kapoor made **Ram Teri Ganga Maili**, a film that symbolically sought to expose the corruption that characterizes modern Indian society. Perhaps it lacks the high spirit and effervescence of his earlier romances or the sincerity of **Jis Desh mein** but **Ram Teri Ganga Maili** depicts Raj Kapoor at his matured best. Although, this film has a love story at its heart, it is the Ganga that in many ways become the vehicle of his message. He selected Mandakini as the heroine for this film who succeeded in generating considerable interest among movie goers.

Besides India Raj Kapoor was a superstar in many other countries. He was the most admired Indian actor in International circuits. He was given highest awards not only in India but in other countries also. On the occasion of 60<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration of Raj Kapoor Soviet director Alexander Zguride commented. "Raj Kapoor has always symbolized the Indian cinema in the eyes of the Soviet film goers...".

Raj Kapoor was not particularly well read. His reaction to socio-economic inequality and injustice was emotional rather than intellectual. He catered to the entertainment needs of the people and never tried to sermonise them through his films as he never considered cinema an intellectual medium. Different facets of emotions find natural and powerful expression in Raj Kapoor's acting.

Raj Kapoor's early films were very popular in Russia. On Nehru's visit there these were the first films to be screened. In those days most of the Russian films were heavy propaganda films and so were Raj Kapoor's and hence there emerged a natural affinity for such Indian films. One aspect that lent mesmerizing effect to Indian films by Raj Kapoor was an element of imagination and splendid settings. Raj Kapoor's films were instrumental in incorporating entertaining elements in the heavy handed propaganda films. Raj Kapoor's films directly influenced Russian classics like **Ballad of a Soldier**.

### Awards & Honours:

Year	Film	Award
1954	Boot Polish	Filmfare Award Best Film
1959	Anari	Filmfare Award Best Actor
1961	Jis Desh Mein Ganga Behti Hai	Filmfare Award Best Film
1961	Jis Desh Mein Ganga Behti Hai	Filmfare Award Best Actor



Year	Film	Award
1964	Sangam	Filmfare Award Best Actor
1964	Sangam	Filmfare Award Best Editor
1971	Mera Naam Joker	Filmfare Award Best Director
1971		Padma Bhushan (India's Third Highest Civilian Award)
1982	Prem Rog	Filmfare Award Best Director
1982	Prem Rog	Filmfare Award Best Editor
1985	Ram Teri Ganga Maili	Filmfare Award Best Director
1985	Ram Teri Ganga Maili	Filmfare Award Best Editor
1988		Dadasaheb Phalke Award

### Popular Films:

- **As Producer/director/actor :** Aag (1948), Barsaat (1949), Awara (1951), Shree 420 (1955), Sangam (1964), Mera Naam Joker (1970), As producer/director: Bobby (1973), Satyam Shivam Sundaram (1978), Prem Rog (1982), As producer/ actor: Aah (1953), Jaagte Raho (1956), Ek Din Ratre (Bengali version of Jaagte Raho) (1956), Jis Desh Men Ganga Behti Hai (1960), Kal Aaj Aur Kal (1971), Dharam Karam (1976)
- **As Producer:** Boot Polish (1954), Ab Dilli Dur Nahi (1957), Biwi O Biwi (1981), Ram Teri Ganga Maili (1985).
- **As Actor:** Inquilab (1935), Hamari Baat (1943), Gauri (1943), Valmik (1946), Neel Kamal (1947), Dil Ki Rani (1947), Chittor Vijay (1947), Jail Yatra (1947), Gopinath (1948), Amar Prem (1948), Andaz (1949), Sunhere Din (1949), Parivartan (1949), Banwra Banwre (1950), Nain Dastan (1950), Jaan Pehchan (1950), Pyaar (1950), Sargam (1950), Ambar (1952), Ashiana (1952).

### Filmography:

*Anhonee (1952), Bewafa (1953), Papi (1956), Chori Chori (1957), Sharada (1958), Parvarish (1958), Phir Subah Hogi (1959) Anari (1959) Char Dil Char Rahen (1959) Do Ustad (1959) Kanhaiya (1959) Main Nashe Mein Hoon (1960), Nazrana (1962), Aashiq (1963), Dil Hi to Hai (1963), Ek Dil Sou Afsane (1964), Dulha Dulhan (1966), Teesri Kasam (1967) Around the World (1967), Diwana (1968) Sapnon Ka Saudagar (1975), Do Jasoos (1976), Khan Dost (1977), Chandi Sona (1980), Abdullah (1982), Gopichand Jasoos (1983), Chor Mandali (1983).*



# ASHOK KUMAR

## Perennial Source of Inspiration

**A**SHOK Kumar better known as Dadamoni in the film fraternity was born in Bhagalpur, Bihar. He did his schooling from Khandwa and graduation from Jabalpur and went to Calcutta (now Kolkata) to pursue law. He was least inclined to practise law. He was very much interested in seeing movies. The two films **Chandidas** and **Puran Bhagat** inspired him to become a director but contrary to his aspirations he turned out to become an accomplished actor. Those days heroes and heroines were looked down upon as pimps and call girls. Overpowered by the idea of becoming a director, he used Rs.35, his examination fee to be paid at the law college, to buy a ticket and went to visit his brother-in-law Shashadhar Mukherjee, a producer and sound engineer at the theatre. He met Himanshu Rai and was employed as an assistant cameraman on a monthly salary of Rs. 150. After a few months he became a laboratory assistant and his salary rose to Rs. 250 a month. Eight months later, Bombay Talkies was all set to launch the film **Jeevan Naiya** starring Devika Rani and Najam-ul-Hussain. Devika Rani eloped with the hero. She was discovered and pardoned but Najam-ul-Hussain was replaced by Ashok Kumar. This was an awesome experience for him. But with the passage of time, Ashok gathered confidence. Dada Muni's first shot was a disaster of sorts. He was supposed to jump on the villain's back on the count of 10 but he jumped earlier and the villain broke a leg. He was hospitalized and the shooting of the film was stalled for nearly four months. In his second movie **Achut Kanya** he enacted the role of a Brahmin boy in love with an untouchable girl. This film was a great success and established him as an actor.

After this, he did many films with Bombay Talkies, till 1943. In his early Bombay Talkies films, Ashok Kumar played the good clean-cut hero in a series of romantic films. He acted in **Izzat** (1937), **Prem Kahani** (1937), **Savitri** (1937), **Nirmala** (1938), **Vachan** (1938), **Kangan** (1939), **Bandhan** (1940), **Anjan** (1941), **Jhoola** (1941), **Naya Sansar** (1941). And then came his biggest hit, **Kismet** (1943), whose record was shattered only by **Sholay**. His role as perhaps the Indian Screen's first cigarette smoking anti-hero with the heart of gold remains his most famous screen role and the film ran for over three years in a theatre in Kolkata.



Famous Urdu writer Sadat Hasan Manto writes about the initial days of Ashok Kumar in Film Industry:

*When Ashok Kumar joined the silver screen, his salary was only Rs. 75 per month. But when he began to earn Rs. 250 per month he got scared. He told me, 'Look at my strange situation! When I received this money from the accountant my hands shook with fear. I didn't know where to keep the money! My house was too small. There was only one cot and two chairs in it and jungle on all sides. If any robber should come in the night.... I was terrified by this thought. I hid the money beneath the carpet under the cot. I had terrible nightmares throughout the night. The first thing I did the next day was to deposit the money in the post office.*

He was in a way the first superstar with audiences thronging the halls only for him. In the year 1943, along with Shashadhar Mukherjee, Gyan Mukherjee and Rai Bahadur Chunilal he left Bombay Talkies to set up a rival film company, Filmistan. He did return to Bombay Talkies as production chief later and starred in one of their biggest ever hits, **Mahal** (1949), but the days of the studio were numbered.

His later films were **Najma** (1943), **Angoothi** (1944), **Chal Chal Re Naujawan** (1944), **Kiran** (1944), **Begum** (1945), **Humayun** (1945), **Eight days** (1946), **Saajan** (1947), **Chandrashekhar** (1948) **Padmini** (1948). His winning streak continued with **Mahal** in 1949, which he also produced under the banner of Bombay Talkies. He also went on to produce films like **Majboor**, **Mashaal**, **Ziddi** etc. Ashok Kumar initiated a more natural style of acting compared to the prevailing style that followed theatrical trends. Devika Rani and Himanshu Rai took pains to groom him. They insisted that Ashok should watch English films and arranged tickets for him. He watched so many stars like Humphrey Bogart and imbibed their style. He absorbed and learnt a lot from the Hollywood films of the day and learnt that acting was not merely standing and saying one's dialogue but reacting as well. According to Film Director Tapan Sinha... "He is the man who showed that film acting is something else. He began to speak and to behave normally."

The 1950s saw Ashok Kumar score in a series of crime films with his trademark cigarette -**Sangram** (1950), **Inspector** (1956), **Howrah Bridge** (1958), **Night Club** (1958) to name some. This, balanced with, the sensitive **Naubahar** (1952), **Parineeta** (1953). He had a small tiff with Bimal Roy during the production of **Parineeta** (1953), when the director, Bimal Roy, supposedly conned him and made **Do Bigha Zameen** with his money. The misunderstanding ended with their teaming together in **Bandini** made in 1963. His characterization of the revolutionary Bikash Ghosh in **Bandini** won him unanimous applause. Dadamoni made the transformation from a superstar star to a character artist effortlessly. **Ek Hi Raasta** (1956) and the riotous **Chalti Ka Naam Gaadi** (1958) ensured that he was the one actor who effortlessly



withstood the famous trio of the 1950s - Dev Anand, Dilip Kumar and Raj Kapoor and more than held his own in the films they did together - **Badbaan** (1954), **Deedar** (1951) and **Bewafaa** (1952) respectively. His other notable films in '50s are **Mahal** (1950), **Aadhi Raat** (1950), **Khiladi** (1950), **Samandar**; (1950), **Mashaal** (1950), **Nishana** (New) (1951), **Afsana** (1952), **Betaab** (1952), **Raag Rang** (1952), **Saloni** (1952), **Jal Pari** (1952), **Kaafila** (1952), **Poonam** (1952), **Tamasha** (1953), **Shamsher** (1954), **Lakeeren** (1954), **Naaz** (1954), **Samaj** (I 955), **Bandish** (1955) **Sardar** (New) (1956), **Bhai Bhai** (1956), **Shatranj** (New-1) (1957), **Bandi** (1957), **Ek Saal** (1957), **Ustad** (1957), **Talash** (1957), **Mr. X** (1958), **Farishta** (1958), **Karigar** (1958), **Raagini** (1958), **Light House** (1958), **Sitaron Se Aage** (1958) **Savera** (New) (1959), **Daaka** (1959), **Bedard Zamana Kya Jane** (1959), **Kangan** (New) (1959), **Naach Ghar** (1959), **Nai Rahen** (1959).

He and Devika Rani did a string of films together – **Izzat** (1937), **Savitri** (1937), **Nirmala** (1938) among others but she was the bigger star and chief attraction in all those films. It was with his trio of hits opposite Leela Chitnis - **Kangan** (1939), **Bandhan** (1940) and **Jhoola** (1941) that Ashok Kumar really came into his own. Going with the trend he sang his own songs and some of them like *Main Ban ki Chidiya*, *Chal Chal re Naujawaan* and *Na Jaane Kidhar Aaj*, *Meri nao chali re* were extremely popular.

His success continued with strong performances in **Arti** (1962), **Gumrah** (1963) and an absolutely flawless one in **Bandini** (1963), matching Nutan's brilliant performance scene for scene. In the late 1960s after **Mamta** (1966) and **Hatey Bazarey** (1967), he effortlessly settled down to playing character roles. His role as a lovable old man in **Aashirwad** (1968) is noteworthy. He acted in many films in 60's like **Santan** (New) (1960), **Aanchal** (1960), **Kala Aadmi** (1960), **Kanoon** (New) (1960), **Kalpana** (New), (1960), **Masoom** (Old) (1961), **Dark Street** (1961), **Flat No. 9** (1961), **Warrant** (1962), **Bezubaan** (1962), **Hong Kong** (1962), **Isi Ka Naam Duniya Hai** (1962), **Nakli Nawab** (1962), **Mehndi Lagi Mere Hath** (1962), **Private Secretary** (1962), **Rakhi** (New) (1962), **Ghar Kee Shobha** (1962), **Bumi Road** (1963), **Aaj Aur Kal** (New) (1963), **Grahasthi** (1963), **Ustadon Ke Ustad** (1963), **Mere Mehboob** (1963), **Meri Surat Teri Ankhen** (1963), **Yeh Raaste Hain Pyar Ke** (1964), **Benazeer** (1964), **Dooj Ka Chand** (1964), **Chitralkha** (New) (1964), **Fariyaad** (1964), **Phoolon Ki Sej** (1964), **Pooja Ke Phool** (1965), **Aakash Deep** (1965), **Chand Aur Suraj** (1965), **Bheegi Raat** (1965), **Naya Kanoon** (1965), **Oonche Log** (1965), **Bahu Beti** (1965), **Aadhi Raat Ke Baad** (1966), **Daadi Maa** (1966), **Afsana** (New) (1966), **Toofan Main Pyar Kahan** (1966), **Yeh Zindagi Kitni Haseen Hai** (1967), **Nai Roshni** (New) (1967), **Jewel Thief** (1967), **Meharbaan** (1967), **Bahu Begum** (1968), **Aashirwad** (New) (1968), **Ek Kali Muskai**. (1968), **Dil Aur Mohabat** (1968), **Aabroo** (New) (1968), **Sadhu Aur Shaitan** (1969), **Aradhana** (1969),



**Bhai Bahen (New-1) (1969), Do Bhai (1969), Inteqam (1969), Aansoo Ban Gaye Phool (1969), Satyakam (1969), Paisa Ya Pyar (1969).**

As a character artiste, Ashok Kumar took on all sorts of characters - the villain in **Jewel Thief (1967)**, the sympathetic father in **Mili (1975)**, (where his songs preceeded the rap phenomenon by decades!) and **Choti Si Baat (1975)**, -the conman in **Victoria No. 203 (1972)**, the rapist in **Jawaab (1970)**. His other films in 70's are **Pyar Ka Sapna (1970), Maa Aur Mamta (1970), Jawab (New2) (1970), Safar (New) (1970), Sharafat (New) (1970), Purab Aur Paschim (1971), Door Ka Raahi (1971), Kangan (New) (1971), Ganga Tera Pani Amrit (1971), Guddi (1971), Hum Tum Aur Woh (1971), Adhikar (New 2) (1971), Naya Zamana (New1) (1971), Umeed (New) (1971), Pakeezah (1972), Anuraag (New) (1972), Dil Daulat Duniya (1972), Rakhi Aur Hathkadi (1972), Sazaa (New) (1972), Victoria No. 203 (1972), Zindagi Zindagi (1972), Zameen Aasman (1973), Do Phool (New) (1973), Dhund (1973), Taxi Driver (New) (1973), Hifazat (1973), Badaa Kabutar (1974), Dulhan (New) (1974), Do Ankhen (1974), Khoon Ki Keemat (1974), Ujala Hi Ujala (1974), Prem Nagar (New) (1974), Paise Ki Gudiya (1974), Badti Ka Naam Dadhi (1975), Chhoti Si Baat (1975), Dafa 302 (1975), Chori Mera Kaam (1975), Ek Mahal Ho Sapnon Ka (1975), Uljhan (1975), Mili (1975). Akraman (1976), Arjun Pandit (1976), Bhanwar (1976), Ek Se Badhker Ek (1976), Harfan Maula (1976), Rangila Ratan (1976), Mazdoor Zindabad (1976), Shankar Dada (1976), Barood (New) (1977), Anand Ashram (1977), Anurodh (1977), Chala Murari Hero Banane (1977), Dream Girl (1977), Khatta Meetha (1977), Heera Aur Patthar (1977), Dil Aur Patthar (1977), Jadu Tona (1977), Mastan Dada (1977), Safed Jhooth (1978), Anmol Tasveer (1978), Anpadh (New) (1978), Apna Khoon (1978), Do Musafir (1978), Chor Ke Ghar Chor (1978), Dil Aur Deewar (1978), Phool Khile Hain Gulshan Gulshan (1978), Tumhare Liye (1978), Premi Gangaram (1979), Guru Ho Ja Shuru (1979), Salaam Memsaab (1979), Janta Hawaldar (1979), Prayashchit (1979). He was by now lovingly called Dadamoni by one and all.**

In 80's as the henpecked head of the family in **Khubsoorat (1980)** he went on to act in films **Bagula Bhagat (1980), Aakhri Insaaf (1980), Khwab (1980), Aap Ke Deewane (1980), Judaai (1980), Nazrana Pyar Ka (1980), Sau Din Saas Ke (1980), Takkar (1980), Saajan Mere Mein Saajan Ki (1981), Chalti Ka Naam Zindagi (1981), Man Gaye Ustad (1981), Jail Yatra (New) (1981), Jyoti (New) (1981), Mehfil (New-2) (1981), Yeh Kaisa Nashaa Hai (1982), Anokha Bandhan (1982), Heeron Ka Chor (1982), Dial 100 (1982), Patthar Ki Lakeer (1982), Mehndi Rang Layegi (1982), Shakti (New) (1982), Sambandh (New 1982), Shaukeen (New) (1982), Awam (1983), Bekarar (1983), Chor Police (1983), Dard Ka Rishta (1983), Haadsa (1983), Mahaan (1983), Pasand Apni Apni (New) (1983). Love In Goa (1984), Duniya (New2) (1984), Farishta (New) (1984), Farishta (New-2) (1984), Raja Aur Rana (1984), Akalmand (New) (1985), Bhago**



**Bhoot Aaya** (1985), **Durga** (New) (1985), **Ek Daku Shaher Mein** (1985), **Farz Ki Keemat** (1985), **Grahasthi** (New) (1985), **Phir Aaye Barsat** (1985), **Tawaif** (1986), **Dahleez** (New) (1986), **Inteqam Ki Aag** (1986), **Ram Tera Desh** (1986), **Amma** (1986), **Shatru** (1987), **Pyar Kiya Hai Pyar Karenge** (1987), **Awaam** (1987), **Mr. India** (New) (1987), **Pyar Ki Jeet** (1987), **Watan Ke Rakhwale** (1987), **Woh Din Aayega** (1987), **Hifazat** (New) 1989, **Clerk** (1989). In the 1980s, Ashok Kumar cut down his work and apart from films, was seen occasionally on Television anchoring the vastly popular soap **Hum Log** or playing the title role in **Bahadur Shah Zafar**.

However by the mid 1990s with age and ill-health he cut down on all work. His films in 90's are **Dana Pani** (1991-New), **Maut Ki Saza** (1992), **Humla** (1996), **Beqabu** (1996) and perhaps his last film was **Return of Jewel Thief** in 1997.

Besides acting, Ashok Kumar was a fine painter and also an active practitioner of homeopathy. Since his wife Shobha's death in 1987, he lived alone in his bungalow in Chembur. Suffering from severe asthma, he was confined to his home most of the time, but made a rare appearances at some Film Award Ceremony where he was felicitated. Dadamoni passed away in Mumbai on December 10, 2001 due to cardiac arrest.

Over the years, some unforgettable films have also been made. The industry has produced talent in every field of filmmaking that will rank among the very best. One hero, who started his career more than 50 Years ago and who never once, gave a less than excellent performance is Ashok Kumar. Over the years his cumulative audience would easily exceed a few billion. He is known as the evergreen hero.

Ashok Kumar's career spectrum reads like a veritable classification of the milestones in Indian cinema. From the best socials (**Achut Kanya**, **Kangan**, **Bandhan**, **Jhoola**, **Kanoon**) to the best romances (**Bandini**, **Mahal**, **Gumrah**) and the best character roles (**Mere Mahboob**, **Bahu Begum Aashirwad**, **Mili**, **Khubsoorat**), the actor built a benchmark with whatever he undertook. Till today, the 1940's **Kismet** stands out as a landmark for more than one reason: for creating the first archetype of the anti-hero with Ashok Kumar's perfect portrayal of a thief who loses his heart to a handicapped girl; for striking the first "Quit India" note in popular cinema with chart buster "*Door hato aye duniawalon, Hindustan hamara hai*" and for becoming the first blockbuster of Bollywood with a record run of almost two years. But more than his histrionics on the screen and his vast career span which stretches from pre-Independence India to turn-of-the-century India (his last film was the 1990's starrer **Return of the Jewel Thief**), Ashok Kumar lived larger than life as an intrinsic art of Indian psyche. Be it blowing enigmatic smoke rings in **Jewel Thief**, standing tall before Madhubala's seductive charms in **Aiye Mehrban**, playing a fun loving father in **Khubsoorat** or beaming the tube with a characteristic smile in



a popular soap, Dadamoni remains an undeniable essence of **Hum Log**: the quintessential Indian who is multi-dimensional in appeal that transcends all boundaries.

### **Awards & Honours:**

Ashok Kumar was the chairman of the jury for National Awards in 1982 and in 1990. He was conferred honorary D. Litt. for his achievements in the field of cinema by the Rabindra Bharati University in 1997. He was also the recipient of the Sangeet Natak Academy Award, Padmashree and Padmabhushan awards. He received the Filmfare Award for Lifetime Achievement in 1995.



# LATA MANGESHKAR

## Mesmerising Voice of Indian Screen

**A** SINGER with the most perfect voice in the world – the Melody Queen of India, Lata Mangeshkar was born on 28<sup>th</sup> September, 1929 in Indore (Madhya Pradesh). Her father Dinnanath Mangeshkar was a playback singer and her first guru. Later on she learnt the finer aspects of music from Aman Ali Khan and Amanat Khan. Her father's untimely demise in 1942 prompted her to support her family at such a tender age. A week after her father's death she acted in Master Vinayak's **Pahli Manglagour**, a successful Marathi film. In the same year she entered Hindi movies with her song *Aap Ki Sewa Mein*. She took to singing profession at the age of 16. She started her career with the movie **Kiti Hasal** in 1942. In subsequent years she was seen in varied roles from a producer to composer to actress in various films.

During her father's life time she essayed the role of Narad with her father in the role of Arjun and it turned out to be a stunning performance. Lata matured and sobered very early in her life. Though not inclined towards acting, she played several cameo parts in Hindi and Marathi films including **Pahli Mangalagaur** (1942), **Maze Baal** (1943), **Badi Maa** (1945), **Subhadra** (1946), **Chimukhla Sansar** (1943), **Gajabahu** (1944), **Jeevan Yatra** (1946), **Mand** (1948), **Chhatrapati Shivaji** (1952).

In Noor Jehan starrar **Badi Maa** she acted and sang for herself and for her younger sister Asha.

Her voice has bloomed with the advancement of age and become better modulated and more melodious. Her song *Ayega Aanewala* catapulted Madhubala to eternal fame in the film **Mahal** when she was only 20. At the age of 44 she immortalized Dimple Kapadia with the song *Hum tum ek kamare mein band hon* for **Bobby**. Her song *Madhosh dil ki dhadkan* for Twinkle at the age of 69 imparted a bright halo to her (Twinkle) in the film **Jab Pyar Kisi Se Hota Hai** and a year later Preity Zinta swung into action with *Jiya Jale...*

From an early age Lata was recognized as being highly gifted musically and she could master the vocal exercises effortlessly. Strong and powerful voices of 1940s – like Noorjehan, Shamshad Begam and Zohrabai Ambalewali were put to shade on the advent of Lata Mangeshkar.



In 1945 she was denied a song in the film starring Kamini Kaushal on the excuse of her voice being very thin and soft. Producer S. Mukherjee was the person who rejected her in film **Shaheed**. Gulam Haider prophesied at this rejection that Lata would overshadow everyone else and it came out to be true. Lata Mangeshkar soon became a phenomena from a struggling singer and producers started feeling elated on being entertained by Lata for their films. Melody explosion took place with her immorable songs like *Uthaye ja unke sitam*, *Ayega ane wala*, *Dhire se aja ri*, *Chale Jana nahi* and *Jiya bekarar hai*.

Composers Madan Mohan and Lata Mangeshkar pulled together very well to their mutual advantage. Both of them were of extraordinary calibre and genius.

Lata has inspired generation of composers, heroines and film makers. She was regarded as the personification of the goddess of learning. Her voice provided Raj Kapoor's **Satyam Shivam Sundram** a haloed effect and it proved to be a milestone in Hindi filmdom.

Lata's legendary voice has motivated co-artists. Duets with others were a healthy competition between colleagues. Last minute improvisation by her used to take the songs well beyond the periphery of composition into the realm of eternity. Rafi matched her 'Gayaki' note to note. And yet sometimes she took even his breath away. On performing with younger co-artists she always managed to either steal the entire show or make a little extra impact.

Her versatility was deeply rooted in her intrinsic sensitivity. Once the rendering of a complex Bengali song by Salil overwhelmed her and she fainted.

Lata always encouraged budding singers and they feel elated in her company. Role enaction by Dimple in **Bobby** and **Lekin** brings Lata to your memory through the songs *Hum tum ek kamre* and *Yara seeli seeli* respectively. Lata has maintained her pivotal position among singers all through the change of trends and technology over the past several decades. It is no mere coincidence that most glorious chapters in the life of young directors like Jatin Lalit, Anand Milind, Vishal Bhardwaj. Uttam Singh and A.R. Rehman were those in which Lata had participated in their ventures and whenever she had been away from them, their success remained a bit diminished.

Lata has sung in more than 500 films, acted in 8 movies (between 1942 and 1948), composed music for movie **Sadhi Manse** in 1965 and produced movie **Lekin** in 1990. After India's set backs in war with China in 1962 Lata had sung the song *Aai mere watan ke logo, zara aankh me bhar lo pani*. This song written by Poet Pradeep, moved people into tears and still remains as one of the most patriotic songs sung by her.



About Lata's golden voice Sunil Sethi writes in *India Today*:

*It is the voice (of Lata Mangeshkar) that no Indian can miss- the voice that has mesmerized Indians for over five decades. The voice, like the blithe spirit of music, has wafted far and wide. It is the voice to which the roadside vendor in Delhi has transacted his business, the long-distance trucker has sped along the highway, the Army Jawan in Ladakh has kept guard at his frontier bunker and to which the glittering elite have dined in luxury hotels. The voice, like Mahatma Gandhi's loin cloth and Rabindranath Tagore's beard, has become a part of India's collective unconscious.*

Lata Mangeshkar has always enthused budding music-directors by offering to render playbacks for them, and in the past five decades, there must be very few, indeed who have not benefited from Lata's enormous talent. She has sung in virtually all Indian languages with equal success. She has also composed music for some films, with the adopted name of Anand Ghar. They were **Ram Ram Pahune, Mohityanchi Manjula, Maratha Tituka Melwawa, Sadhi Manse and Tambadi Ati.**

## Awards & Honours:

Lata Mangeshkar's contribution to Hindi film world has been phenomenal. Various awards and trophies won by her are testimony to this. She received several doctorates from various universities varying from Pune university to New York University. She won Padma Bhushan (1999), Padma Vibhushan (1999), Dadasaheb Phalke (1990) and Bharat Ratna (2001).

**National Awards :** (1972) **Parichay**- Best Female Playback Singer (1972), **Kora Kagaz**-Best Female Playback Singer (1975), **Lekin** – Best Female Playback Singer (1990), **Rajiv Gandhi Award** (1997).

**State Awards:** **Sadhi Manse** – Best Playback Singer (1966), **Jait Re Jait** – Best Playback Singer (1967), BFJA Award: **Woh Kaun Thi** –Best Female Playback Singer (1964), **Milan** – Best Female Playback Singer (1967), **Raja aur Rank** – Best Female Playback Singer (1968), **Saraswati Chandra** – Best Female Playback Singer (1969), **Do Raaste** – Best Female Playback Singer (1970), **Tere Mere Sapne** – Best Female Playback Singer (1971), **Marjina Abdulla** (Bengali)-Best Female Playback Singer (1973), **Kora Kagaz** – Best Female Playback Singer (1975), **Ek Duje Ke Liye**-Best Female Player Singer (1984), **Ram Teri Ganga Maili** – Best Female Singer (1985)

**Filmfare Awards:** **Madhumati** –Best Female Playback Singer (1958), **Bees Saal Baad**-Best Female Playback Singer (1962), **Khandan**-Best Female Playback Singer (1965), **Jeene Ki Rah** – Best Female Playback Singer (1969), Filmfare



felicited her by conferring upon her Raj Kapoor Award for Lifetime Achievement (1993), **Lata Mangeshkar Awards:** Madhya Pradesh Government instituted Lata Mangeshkar Award in 1984 for her outstanding contribution to music. First recipient of this Award was Naushad in 1984. Maharashtra Government also instituted Lata Mangeshkar Award in 1992.



# **A. NAGESWARA RAO**

## **Doyen of Telugu Cinema**

**V**ETERAN TELUGU producer and actor A. Nageswara Rao was born on September 20, 1924 at Venkataraghavapuram, a village near Gudivaa in Krishna district in a middle class farmer's family. He enacted varied and challenging roles very successfully. He performed a spectrum of roles - a charming prince, a frustrated lover, a valiant soldier and a holy saint, a college student to a composed collector and his powerful performance led him from a humble beginning to the highest national level.

He entered the film world with his small role in the film **Dharma Patni** which was released in January, 1941. He played the role of Lord Rama in **Sri Sitarama Janam** which brought him instant success and many accolades. His position was consolidated with films like **Bala Raju** and **Keelu gurran**. Portrayal of great cultural and literary celebrities endeared him to millions of his fans both on and off the screen. He lived in the roles of these celebrities like **Mahakavi Kalidas** (1960), **Bhakt Jaidev** (1961), **Amarasilipi Jakkanna** (1964), **Vipranarayana** (1954), **Bhakta Tukaram** (1973), **Mahakavi Kshetrappa** (1976), **Chakradhari** (1977), **Tenali Ramkrishna** (1956), and many others.

He excelled in mythological roles as – **Abhimanyu** in **Maya Bazar** (1957), **Mahavishnu** in **Chenchu Laxmi** (1958), **Arjun** in **Sri Krishnarjuna Yudham** (1963) and every film hit the bull's eye.

He was equally versatile in the enaction of tragedy roles in the romantic films like **Laila Majnu** (1949), **Anarkali** (1955), **Batasari** (1961), **Mooga Manasulu** (1963), **Prem Nagar** (1971), **Premabhishekam** (1981), **Meghasandesam** (1983) and his excellent performance have made them immortal. He is acclaimed as the charming youth in rural oriented films like – **Bala Raju** (1948), **Rajulu Marayi** (1955), **Namma Bantu** (1959).

His portrayal as **Devdas** (1953) won him world-acclaim. His comedy roles are equally marvelous as is testified by the films like **Chakrapani** (1954), **Missamma** (1955) and **Preminchikoodu** (1965). Majority of his social films like **Samasaram** (1950), **Aradhana** (1962), **Bratuku Truvu** (1953), **Donga Ramudu** (1955), **Dr. Chakravarti** (1964), **Ardhangi** (1955), **Mangalya Balam**



(1958), **Illarikam** (1959), **Santi Nivasam** (1960), **Dasara Bullodu** (1971), **Velugu Needalu** (1964), and so many others have made a remarkable impact on the movie lovers. The splendid performance in the film **Navaratri** (1966) portrayed all the navarasas with an equal felicity bears testimony to his command over action as an artist.

### **Awards & Honours:**

- In 1957, on his completion of 60 films, he was conferred upon the title 'Nat Samarat' at Vijaywada.
- Received Padmashree in 1968
- Conferred Padmabhushan in 1988.
- Awarded Raghupati Venkaiah Award from Andhra Pradesh government in 1990.
- In 1993 Nagarjuna University conferred on him honorary D. Litt.
- Received Anna Award by Tamil Nadu Government in 1994.
- Received the First NTR National Film Award from Government of Andhra Pradesh.
- Received Kalidasa Kousthubh Award from Government of Madhya Pradesh.
- Felicitated by Telugu Film Industry for his integrated contribution to the development of film industry in 1997.
- First chairman of the Board of directors of Annapurna Pictures Private Limited which has produced many successful films both in Telugu and Tamil.
- Founder of M/S Chakravarti Chitra which is committed to bring out mainly message oriented, educational and experimental films and produced **Sudi Gundalu** (1967), and **Maro Prapancham** (1970).
- Invited as a State guest by the USA, England, France and Germany in 1964 and by USSR in 1972 besides some other countries to study the Film Craft and Theatre Arts in the respective countries.

He was deeply concerned with the welfare of the people. He founded Annapurna Pulverizing Mills and Annapurna Flour Mills at Eluru pharmaceutical establishment. He was responsible for setting up of Annapurna Lithographic at Hyderabad.



He was generous towards educational institutions since the beginning of his career and wanted to create opportunities for any one who needed support for educational pursuits and set aside a considerable part of his income for it. He authored many books including his autobiography.

As far back as in 1957, he donated a considerable sum to the Andhra University. He created scholarships in the university of Andhra, Madras, Sri Venkateswara, Osmania, Bangalore, Kerala and Mumbai for awarding the needy and deserving students. On many occasions he gave many performances for raising funds for various colleges and schools.

During the period of Chinese aggression, Pakistani aggression and during Bangladesh war he raised funds for the welfare of the soldiers, co-artists and technicians.

## Filmography:

*Dharma Patni (Telugu) (1941), Sri Sitarama Janam (Telugu) (1944), Mayalokam (Telugu) (1945), Muggu Marateelu (Telugu) (1946), Palnati Yudhamu (Telugu) (1947), Patna Mala (Telugu) (1948), Bala Raju (Telugu) (1948), Keelugurram (Telugu), Raksharekha (Telugu), Laila Majnu (Telugu) (1949), Sri Lakshmana Katha (Telugu), Palletooripillai (Telugu), Paraman Andayyaswisshulu (Telugu), Swapna Na Sundari (Telugu), Samsaram (Telugu) Thilotnama (1950), Mayanalia (Tamil/Telugu), Soudamini (Telugu), Saudamini (Tamil), Ore Iravu (Tamil), Stri Sahasam (Telugu/Tamil), Mantra Dandam (Telugu), Mayakkari (Tamil) (1951), Prema (Telugu), Kathal (Tamil), Pardesi (Telugu) (1952), Poongodai (Tamil), Brathuku Theruvo (Telugu), Kannathalii (Telugu), Petra Thai (Tamil), Vryari Bhama (Telugu) Devadas (Telugu/Tamil) (1953), Nirupedalu (Telugu), Chakrapani (Telugu), Parivarthana (Telugu), Vipranayana (Telugu), Annadata (Telugu), Missiamma (Telugu) (1957), Aradhanri (Telugu), Rechuka (Guest) Telugu, Rojulmarayi (Telugu), Anarkali (Telugu), Santhanam (Telugu), Vadina (Telugu), Dongaramudu (Telugu) (1955), Tenali Ramkrishna (Telugu), Baale Ramudu (Telugu), Illavelupu (Telugu), Gharanadasi (Telugu), Matharkula Manikkam (Tamil) (1956), Thodikodallu (Telugu), Sati Savitiri (Telugu), Engal Veetu Mahalashmi (Tamil), Maya Bazar (Telugu), Allauddinum Arpudha Viilakrum (Tamil/Telugu), Swarnasundari (Telugu), Dongallo Dor (Telugu), Bhukailas (Telugu) (1957), Lakshmi (Tamil), Krishna Maya (Telugu), Adapettanam (Telugu), Swarnasundari (Hindi), Pellinati Premamalu (Telugu) (1958), Mangalya Balam (Telugu), Manjal Mahimai (Tamil), Athisayappen (Tamil), Pellisadadi (Telugu), Jayabheri (Telugu), Kalyana Parisu (Tamil), Illarikam (Telugu), Kalaivanan (Tamil), Valaki Oppandam (Tamil), Daivame Thunai (Tamil) (1959), Nammuna Bandu (Tamil), Sant Nivasam (Telugu), Pattaliyan Vetri (Telugu), Mahakavi Kalidasu (Telugu), Pellikanka (Telugu), Engal Selvi (Tamil) (1960) Abhimanam (Telugu), Runanu Bandan*



(Telugu), Mababu (Telugu), Velugu Needalu, Thooya Ullam (Tamil) Anbu Amagan (Tamil), Bharya Bharthulu (Telugu), Bhakta Jayadeva (Telugu), Bhatasari (Telugu), Bhatasari (Telugu), Kanal Neer (Tamil), Vagdanam (Telugu), Sabash Raja (Telugu), Iddrau Mitrulu (Telugu), (1961), Aradhana (Telugu), Mandhi Manasulu (Telugu), Gundamma Katha (Telugu), Manithan Marvillai (Tamil), Kalimi Lemaul, Kula Gotralu, Siri Sampadalu, Sri Kirishna Arjun Yudha, Chaduvukunna Ammailu, Pen Amannam (Tamil) (1962), Punarjamma (Telugu) (1963), Puja Phalam (Telugu), Aatma Balam (Telugu), Muga Manasulu (Telugu), Murali Krishna (Telugu), Amara Silip Jakkanna (Telugu), Dr. Chakravarthi (Telugu), Rama Dasu (Telugu), (1964), Sumangali (Telugu), Anthestulu (Telugu), Preminchi Choodu (Telugu), Manushyulu Mamarhlu (Telugu) (1965) Zamindar (Telugu), Aatma Goweavam (Telugu), Nava Ratri (Telugu), Manase Mandiram (Telugu), Aastiparalu (Telugu), Sati Sumathi (Telugu), (1966), Gruha Lakshi (Telugu), Prana Mitrulu (Telugu), Vasanta Sena (Telugu), Rahasuam (Telugu), Pula Raagadu (Telugu) (1968), Brahmachari (Telugu), Mandhi Kudumbam (Telugu), Govula Gopanna (Telugu), Sudigundalu (Telugu) Bangaru Gajulu (Telugu), Akka chellelu (Telugu), Jai Jawan (Telugu), Maro Prapancham (Telugu), Dharma Datha (Telugu), Iddaru Ammayilu (Telugu), Dasara Bullodu (Telugu), Manasu Mangalayam (Telugu), Pavitra Bnadhan (Telugu), Rangeli Raja (Telugu), Subutrudu (Telugu), Amayakuralu (Telugu), Sreeman Thudu (Telugu), Premanzgaz (Telugu) (1971), Bharya Bidaalu (Telugu), Rythu Kutumbam (Telugu), Beedala Paatlu (Telugu), Manchi Rojulu Vatchauiyai (Telugu), Datta Putrudu (Telugu), Vichitra Bandham (Telugu), Koduku Kodalu (Telugu), Bangaru Bagbu (Telugu), Kanna Koduku (Telugu) (1972), Bharati Vilas (Telugu), Bhakta Tukaram (Telugu), Palleturi Bava (Telugu), Andala Ramudu (Telugu), Marupurani Manishi (Telugu) (1973), Premalu Pelliulu (Telugu), Mahchi, Bangrau Vadu (Telugu), Bangaru Kalalu (Telugu), Dorai Babu (Telugu) (1974), Mahakavi Kshetriya (Telugu), Secretary (Telugu), Mahayitudu (Telugu) (1976), Chakradhari (Telugu), Aalu Mangalu (Telugu), Bangaru Bohharu (Telugu), Raja Ramesh (Telugu), Nathmeeyudu (Telugu) (1977), Devadasu Mali Puttadu (Telugu) (1978) Vichitra Jeevitha (Telugu), Rama Krishnulu (Telugu), Sri Rama Raksha (Telugu), Ravande Ramuduaitha (Telugu), Hema Hemmeelu (Telugu), Hmuddula Koduku (Telugu), Andaha Ammayi (Telugu) (1979), Edanthastula Meda (Telugu), Nayakudi Vinayukudi (Telugu), Buchi Babu (Telugu), Pilla Zameendar (Telugu) (1980), Srivaru Muchatlu (Telugu), Sathyam Sivan (Telugu), Prema Kaanuka (Telugu), Premabishekam (Telugu), Guru Sisihulu (Telugu) (1981), Yuvaraja (Telugu), Raagadeepam (Telugu), Meghasandesam (Telugu), Gopikrishnudu (Telugu), Bangaru Kanuka (Telugu) (1982), Sri Ranganeetulu (Telugu), Ramudu Kadu Krishnudu (Telugu), Doorantha Sankaranthi (Telugu), Muddula Mogudu (Telugu), Bahudoorapu Batasari (Telugu), Amarajeevi (Telugu) (1983), Vasantha Geethayam (Telugu), Thandava Krishnudu (Telugu), S.P. Bhayankar (Telugu), Sangeetha Samarat (Telugu), Kottewarudu (Telugu), Jusitice Chakravarthy (Telugu) (1984), Barya



*Bharthala Bandhan (Telugu), Dhampahyma (Telugu), Chitraya Chinukulu (Telugu), Illale Devata (Telugu) (1985), Aididampatulu (Telugu), Brama Rudrulu (Telugu) (1986), Collector Gari Abbai (Telugu), Athma Banduvulu (Telugu) (1987), Raogari Illu (Telugu), Bhale Dhampathulu (Telugu) Aadharsha Vanthudu (Telugu), Raajkeeya Chaparangam (Telugu), Suthradharulu (Telugu) (1989), Dagudu Moothala Dhampathyam (Telugu), Iddaru Iddare (Telugu), Raogarintlo Rowdy (Telugu) (1990), Seeeth Ramiahgari Manavaralu (Telugu) (1991), College Bullodu (Telugu), Madhavaihgari Manavadu (Telugu), Pranadaata (Telugu), Ragulutunna Bhartham (Telugu) (1992), Mechanic Alludu (Telugu), Radhasaradhi (Telugu), Rajeshwari Kalyannam (Telugu) (1993), Bangaru Kutumbam (Telugu), Theerpu (Telugu) (1994), Maya Bazar (Telugu), God Father (Telugu) (1995), Rayudugaru Naayudugaru (1996), Pandaga (Telugu), Sri Seetha Ramula Kayanam Chodamu Rarandi (Telugu).*



# BHALJI PENDHARKAR

## Titan of Marathi Cinema

**B**HALJI Pendharkar was born on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1898 in Maharashtra. His father was an eminent surgeon attached to the Royal Court of Kolhapur and King Sahu Maharaj. He received his early education at Kolhapur but failed to complete his matriculation. He joined the army and was posted in north India. On his return to Pune he worked as a manager of Laxmi and Apolo Theatres. Afterwards he became sub-editor in the nationalistic newspaper *Kesari*. Charm of Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak, the paper's editor, sucked him into the vortex of the national struggle. He started his own film newspaper *Cinema Samachar*. He did research on the life and times of Shivaji, the Maratha ruler. He wrote plays *Asurilalsa*, *Raashtra Sansaar* and *Kayade Bhang*.

Bhalji Pendharkar wrote his first script as a writer for the silent film. **Prithvi Vallabh** in 1924. He directed **Vandematram** (Silent) and **Shyam Sunder** (Talkie) in 1934 which was the first Indian Silver Jubilee film. His first produced film was **Netaji Palkar** (1939). **Thambdi Mati** was the last film directed and produced by him in 1969. His last film was **Shabash Sunbai** in 1986 which was directed by Suryakant and Dada Kondke as he was unwell at that time. Pendharkar decided to direct his own stories and therefore when Sharad Film Company accepted the story Bajirao Mastani he was also engaged as a director. **Vande Matram Ashram** was his next film produced with his elder brother Baburao. This was subjected to mutilation by the censors. He wrote scripts for Prabhat Film company. In 1934 he alongwith Baburao Pendharkar and Vinayak set up a State sponsored Company. He made films for Saraswati Cinetone and his own company, Arun Pictures. He also wrote scripts for other directors including Shantaram (**Sairandhri**-1933). He remained involved in cinema for seventy years and produced more than sixty Marathi and eight Hindi films – most of them were based on historical and cultural themes.

Chhatrapati Shivaji left an indelible mark on his personality. His notable movies were **Netaji Palkar**, **Bhairji Naik**, **Thoranchachi Kamala**, **Chatrapati Shivaji**, **Pavankind**, **Mohityangi Manjula**, **Maharani Yesubai**, **Maratha Thithuka Melwawa**, **Shyam Sunder**, **Akashwani**.

He introduced many new artists including Shahu Modak, Shanta Apte, Raj Paranjape, G.D. Madgulkar, Jaishankar Danane, Suryakant, Chandrakant, Suryakant



Naik, Shanta Jog. Vasant Shinde, Ramesh Deo, Asha Kale, Ashwin Bhawe and Dada Kondke.

### **Awards & Honours:**

He received National award for **Saadhi Manase** (1965) as the best film. This film won 11 awards including Maharashtra State's Best film Award. **Garchi Rani** (1968) was given the State's Best Film Award. Government of Maharashtra introduced Bhalji Pendharkar Award which is given every year to the best director.





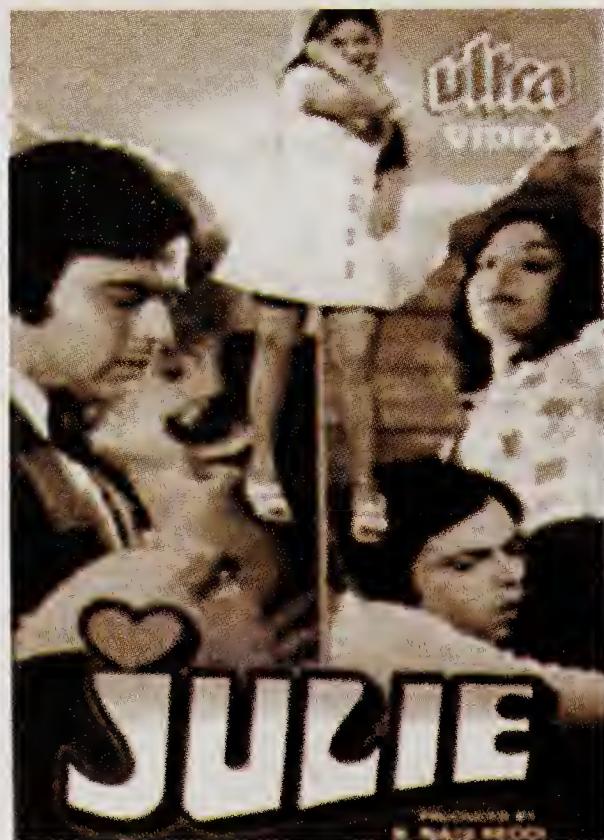
# V. SHANTARAM

Films directed by V. Shantaram

*Above (left) A still from Parchhayeen, 1952 Hindi; Above (centre) Dahej , 1950, Hindi; Above (right) Shakuntala, 1943, Hindi*

1985





**B. NAGI REDDI**

*Above (left & right) Publicity posters of films produced  
under the banner of B. Nagi Reddi*

**1986**





# RAJ KAPOOR



*Top (left) with Nargis in Awara, 1951; Above (left) with Tanuja in Sapnon ka Saudagar, 1968; Above (right) with Nargis in Barsaat, 1948*

1987



# ASHOK KUMAR



*Above (left) in Kangan, 1939, Hindi; Above (centre) in Achut Kanya  
Above (right) in Sangram 1950, Hindi*

1988





# LATA MANGESHKAR



*Above (left) in a concert; Above (centre) with family; Above (right)  
with Bade Ghulam Ali Khan*

1989



# A. NAGGESWARA RAO

1990

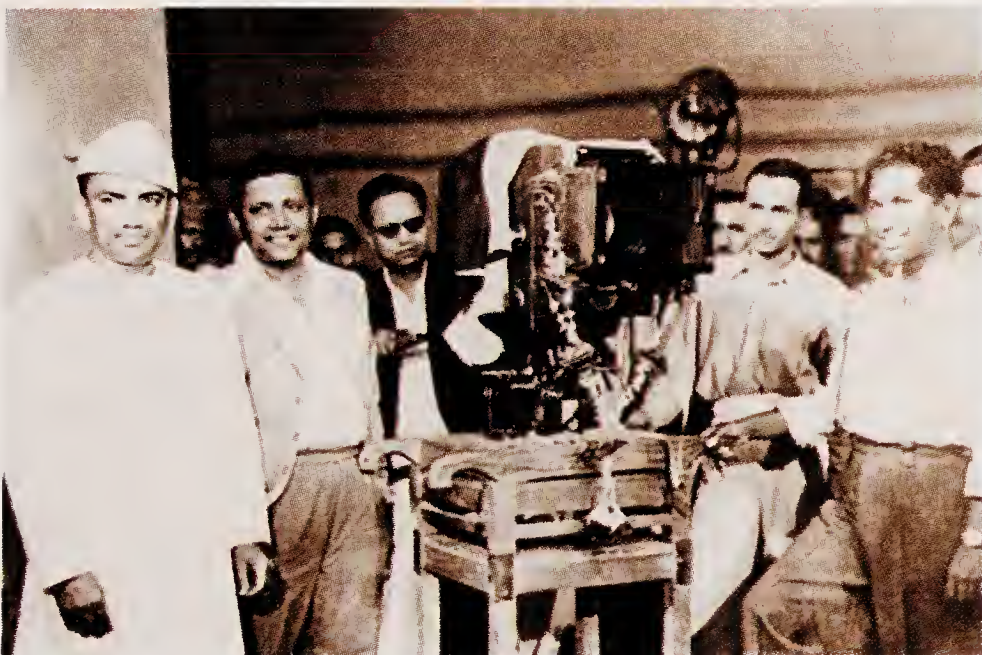


*Above (left) in Laila Majnu, 1949, Telugu; Above (right) in Bandhipotu Dongalu, 1968, Telugu*





# BHALJI PENDHARKAR



*Top (left) A publicity poster of Bhalji Pendharkar's Shabas Sunbai, 1986, Marathi; Above (left) Bhalji Pendharkar with his crew members; Above (right) A still from Sadhi Manse, 1965, Marathi directed by Bhalji Pendharkar*

1991





# BHUPEN HAZARIKA



*Above (left) The composer in his studio; Above (right) Publicity poster of Kalpana Lajmi's Daman, 2000, Hindi whose music was composed by Bhupen Hazarika*

1992



# **BHUPEN HAZARIKA**

## **The Bard of the Brahmaputra**

**B**HUPEN Hazarika was born in 1926 in Sadiya village in Assam into a family of teachers. He was eldest of six brothers and four sisters. His grandfather established the Bankshidhar Harzarika school at Sibsagar where his father Neelkant Hazarika was a teacher. Later he taught at Cotton College in Guwahati.

Bhupen did his High school from Tejpur Government High school, and Intermediate (Arts) from Guwahati in 1942. For university education he joined Benaras Hindu University (B.H.U.). He was exposed to some of the greatest exponents of Indian classical music. This stirred his soul. Deep down in his heart was a revolutionary which is reflected in his music and film scripts.

After his studies at B.H.U, he left for New York where he received his Doctorate in Mass Communication from Columbia University. He received the Lisle fellowship from Chicago University, USA for studying the use of developing educational projects through cinema.

This Assamese youth had inner harmony with the nature and he wanted to experience its diversity and hence on his way to Columbia he first went to Colombo and from there sailed to Marseilles. On his way to France he was possessed by an intense desire to meet Picasso whom he could meet in the little hours of the day around 4 a.m. and a little conversation with him emoted Picasso to bless him.

During his visit to the USA he had a chance meeting with Paul Robeson who impressed him a lot and this left an indelible impression on him. He also met Priyambada Patel who was pursuing her M.A. degree in Political Science. Gradually their meeting flourished into a full blown love affair and culminated in a wedlock. They parted their ways 13 years after their marriage on friendly terms. Priyambada accepted a job in Canada. Their son Taj Bhupen Hazarika adopted Buddhism and stays in the US with his American wife.

Hazarika remained deeply rooted in Assam. This nomad from Brahmaputra has been singing since his childhood in praise of the land of his birth. His voice transcends all barriers of region and language. He has been popularizing the folk music of the east on stage and screen all over the world and the world acknowledges him as an exponent and interpreter of the voice from the east.



Songs such as *Ami Ak Jagabar*, or *Ganga Amar Maa* have immortalized the music of Assam.

Ranked amongst the leading film makers of India, Hazarika has been instrumental in bringing Assamese Cinema centrestage in Indian arena as well as in world panorama. He has been making sincere efforts for the past 40 years for a better cinema movement and has integrated all the seven north-eastern states, including the tribal culture and traditions through the medium of cinema.

On his return from America he joined IPTA. He utilized music as an element of movement. His song '*Ganga behti hai kyun*' conveys a message of a silent rebellion against the system. In 1967 he joined politics and his popularity among the masses elected him to the legislative assembly as an independent member between 1967-1972 and in this position he could make a full fledged state owned film studio the Jyoti Chitraban studio, in Guwahati, Assam a reality.

Bhupen Hazarika began his career as a child actor in 1939 in the film **Indramati** produced by Jyoti Prasad Aggarwal and wrote and sang at the age of 10.

He has produced, directed composed background music and featured on the film tracks of **Era Bator Sur** (1956), **Shakuntla** (1961), **Pratidhwani** (1964), **Loti Ghoti** (1967), **Chik Mick Bijuli** (1969), **Projapati** (1978), **Swikarokti** (1986), **Siraj** (1988). He also directed and composed music and song for **Mahut Bandhure** in 1958. He has produced, directed and composed music for Arunachal Pradesh's first Hindi Feature film **Dharam Merimaa**, in 1977. He directed a colour documentary for the Arunachal Pradesh Government on tribal folk songs and dances titled **For Whom Sun Shines** in 1974.

He has produced and directed a documentary **Emuthi Saular Kahini** on the co-operative movement for the government of Assam, entirely in a lyrical form. He has also produced and directed a half-hour documentary for Calcutta Doordarshan in 1977 on the folk songs and dances of North-East India titled **Through And Rhythm** and produced and composed music for a colour documentary to promote tourism for the Government of Assam in 1981. He has composed music for the internationally acclaimed award winning Hindi feature film '**Ek Pal** (1986)'. This film was directed by Kalpana Lajmi starring Shabana Azmi, Naseeruddin Shah and Farooque Sheikh. For the prime time National Network Bhupen Hazarika produced and composed the music for the extremely popular serial **Lohit Kinare** based on famous stories of Assam under the direction of Kalpana Lajmi. He was the executive producer and music composer for award winning Hindi film **Rudali** starring Dimple Kapadia, Raj Babbar and Amjad Khan. The famous song "*Dil hoom hoom kare..*" in this film has become an all time hit..



He gave musical services to eminent Bengali films such as **Jankir Alo**, **Mahut Bandhure**, **Kari O Komal Asampta**, **Dampati**, **Chameli Memsaab**, **Dui Bechara**. In 1995 he gave music for Sai Paranjpe's Hindi feature film **Pepiha** and Bimal Dutta's Hindi feature film **Pratimurti**. In 1996 he composed music for Plus Channel's Hindi feature film **Mil Gayee Manzil Mujhe** directed by Lekh Tandon starring Menakshi Sheshadri. In 1996 he composed music for Pan Pictures' Hindi feature film **Darmiyaan** starring Kiran Kher and Tabu and directed and written by Kalpana Lajmi. In 1998 he composed music for the Hindi Feature film **Gajagamini**, produced and directed by eminent painter M.F. Hussain. He produced a 52 episode tele-serial **Dawn** having Shabana Azmi, Mona Ambegaonkar, Deepa Lagoo and others in the cast. He produced 18 episode documentary **Glimpses of Misty East** on socio economic and cultural progress in North East India from 1947 to 1997. This was the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India assignment on the occasion of India's 50<sup>th</sup> independence celebration. In 2000 he composed music for the Hindi feature film **Daman** written and directed by Kalpana Lajmi.

### Awards & Honours:

Bhupen Hazarika won President's National Award for the Best Assamese films **Shakuntala** (1960), **Pratidhwani** (1964), and **Loti Ghoti** (1967) and Best music director award for **Chameli Memsaab** in 1977. Awarded Arunachal Pradesh Government Gold Medal in 1977 for his cinematic presentation and contribution towards tribal welfare and upliftment. In 1977 he won two awards in West Bengal, the Bangla Chalchitra Prasar Samiti and Bangala Chalchitra Puruskar Samiti for being the best music director for the film **Dampati**.

In 1978 he won two awards from Bangladesh as the Best Music Director for the film **Simana Paeriya**. The Gramophone company of India bestowed on him gold discs for his outstanding contribution to Indian music in 1978, 1979 and 1980. He won the Ritwik Ghatak Award for his music direction in two plays – **Mohuwa Sandari** and **Nagini Kanyar Kahani**. In 1979 he won the All India Critic Association Award of the best performing folk artist of India. He also received BFJA Award for Best playback singing for **Ek Din** in 1989 and National Citizens award in Delhi for excellence in music. Shankar Dev Award was given to him in 1987 for his contribution to Assam's culture. In 1987 he won Assam's "Man of the year" award. Sangeet Natak Academy New Delhi, awarded him for his outstanding contribution to Indian music in 1987. The Bengal Film Journalist Association honoured him with the award for his contribution to the world of arts. In 1993 he was named as the first Indian music director for the best music for the film **Rudali** at the Asia Pacific International Film Festival Japan. In 1993, he was honoured with 24<sup>th</sup> Dadasaheb Phalke Award for the year 1992. In 2001 he was given 17<sup>th</sup> Lata Mangeshkar Award by the Madhya Pradesh Government.



Hazarika was the chairman Eastern Region, An Appellate Body of the Central Board of Film Censors, Government of India for a period of 9 years till 1990. He is on the Script Committee of the National Film Development Corporation, Eastern India, National level director in the Board of Directors of Film Development Corporation, Government of India. He was the executive council member of the Children's Film Society headed by Jaya Bachchan. He was the member of the Board of Trust For Poor Artists' Welfare Fund, Government of India. He was the Chairman of the National Film Awards from 1985 to 1990. He is at present on the Governing Council for policymaking decision for the Film and Television, Government of India, Pune. Bhupen Hazarika was also a member of P.C. Joshi Committee appointed by the Information Ministry for revitalizing software programming for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In 1999 he was appointed the Chairman of the Sangeet Natak Academy.

Bhupen Hazarika, one of the greatest ballad singers of India has travelled globally and attended many international conferences on mass communication, poetry, music and cinema. He has represented India at the world conference of composers, presenting songs as an instrument of social change. He was given the honour of inaugurating the world seminar in Congress Hall with his own songs on the liberation of Bangladesh.

Bhupen Hazarika has won hearts of thousands of Indian people through his discs rendering some of his best compositions. He has been the biggest crowd puller and was honoured on the Golden Jubilee of his singing career in 1991. Hazarika has many facets of his persona-such as a film maker, music director, writer and editor of a popular journal *Amar Pratinidhi*, a film and literary monthly magazine.



# MAJROOH SULTANPURI

## Rebellious Poet

**M**AJROOH Sultanpuri, one of the brightest stars in the firmament of Indian cine music was born at Sultanpur village in Azamgarh district of Uttar Pradesh on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1919. His birth name was Asrar Hasan Khan. Though his mother tongue was Urdu, he made a judiciously mixed use of Hindi and Urdu in making his music popular. He was probably the most versatile and multidimensional song writer in the realm of Indian Cinema. He could write with equal ease and perfection in different modes like ghazals, quawalis, mujras, bhajans, folk based songs, sad and comic songs, children's songs, cabrets and discos, romantic songs and any conceivable genre of film songs.

Asrar Hasan Khan (Majrooh Sultanpuri) started his – career as a Unani Hakim after receiving professional training at Unani College, Lucknow. But destiny had other things in store for him. His inner restlessness which had divine providence was willing to find expression in poetic dimensions. He gave up his career as Hakim to pursue his inner dictates.

His intimate association with persons of eminence like Jigar Moradabadi, Moin Hasan Jazbi and Faiz Ahmad polished his poetic abilities to dazzling brilliance. Undoubtedly, he was a progressive poet. His writings had national interests immersed in human sensibilities. Majrooh's left leaning, Marxist beliefs and ideologies prompted his landing in prison to suppress his rebellious voice. Two precious formative years (1950-51) of his life were spoiled in the Arthur Road prison Byculla. But this imprisonment could not dampen his rebellious spirit. Instead, it proved to be a boon in disguise making him more resolute and thoughtful. After his release from the jail he acquired the name "Majrooh Sultanpuri".

During a visit to Mumbai in 1945 for a Mushaira, the famous filmmaker A.R. Kardar invited him and some others to write lyrics for a situation in his planned magnum opus – **Shahjehan**. Majrooh won the competition and history was made when his first song was recorded under the baton of Naushad and in the voice of K.L. Saigal in February 1945 and after this there was no looking back and he made progress in this domain by leaps and bounds. Undoubtedly he was a genius and during his lifetime wrote about 8,000 songs for 330 films including three Bhojpuri films. His songs reflected his lyrical capabilities.



The famous songs *Uthaye Ja Sitam...* and *Ek Rupaiya*, a romantic song *Phoolon ki Rani*, and pop song *Piya tu* were written with equal ease and spontaneity. His poetic ability was instrumental in catapulting many budding actors and actresses to the sky of prominence and brilliance from the sea of oblivion. **Caravan** music director R.D. Burman and **Chalti Ka Naam Gadi** music director S.D. Burman acquired prominence due to Majrooh Sultanpuri's songs. His contribution was phenomenal in the blooming of music directors O.P. Nayyar's **Aar Par**, Khayyam's **Footpath**, Laxmikant Pyarelal's **Dosti**, R.D. Burman's **Teesri Manzil**, S. Madan's **Batwara**, Rajesh Roshan's **Kunwara Baap**, Vasu Chakravorti's **Subse Bada Rupaiya**, Anand Milind's **Quyamat Se Quayamat Tak**, Jatin Lalit's **Yara Dildara**, Tusar's **Andaaz Apna Apna**.

Although Sultanpuri worked with top music directors like Anil Biswas, Naushad, Madan Mohan, O.P. Nayyar, Roshan and Laxmikant Pyarelal his best work was with S.D. Burman and R.D. Burman. In fact his most outstanding work was in Nasir Hussain's frothy musicals like **Teesri Manzil**, **Yaadon Ki Barat** and **Hum Kisi Se Kum Nahin**. He continued to write youthful songs even in Hussain's son Mansoor Khan's films like the evergreen **Quyamat Se Quayamat Tak**.

Besides, new generation singer Talat Mahmood could carve out a niche in filmdom due to his song *Jalate hein Jiske liye* written by Majrooh for the film **Sujata**.

Majrooh evolved a new style of dialogue song writing in 60's like *Haal Kaisa hai Janab ka? Kya Khayal hai aap ka?* for the film **Chalti Ka Naam Gadi**. This was introduced on an experimental basis but to the astonishment of everybody proved to be a benchmark. Song like this one retains its charm and liveliness till date.

Majrooh popularized words of endearment like *janab, huzoor, saheb, miya, banda parwar, kibla, Mohatarma, dilbar, and hamdam*.

Spontaneous outburst like *Rahein na rahen hum mehka karenge* and *Ik din bik jayega maati ke mol...* have become an inseparable part of the caravan in which he set out five decades ago.

“Art is the essence of our culture. So songs should be such that keep traditions in mind. Songs which embarrass can hardly have lyrics worth mentioning about” he opined.

With this plea to Majrooh Sultanpuri, expressed his displeasure at the current trend of the music. He was greatly recognized in both spheres –*film* and *ilm*. One of his well known verses.

*Mein akela he chala tha janib-e-manzil magar, log saath aate gaye aur carvan banta gaya.*



Majrooh's first and only published work *Gazal* was published in 1956, seventeen years after he began writing verse, though it has since run into several editions, one of which is named *Mashaal-e-Jaan* (The torch of the soul).

Majrooh was honoured with several prestigious awards like the Ghalib Award and Iqbal Samman Award for his intellectual contribution to Urdu literature. This was given by the Madhya Pradesh Government in 1992.

In 1993 Dadasaheb Phalke Award was conferred on him for his tremendous contribution to Indian cinema. He was felicitated and honoured in various countries as well.

In Majrooh's own words on receiving Dadasaheb Phalke Award:

*There is a reason why I felt that I deserved my Dadasaheb Phalke Award more than anyone else. When I won it, there were dissident voices in my fraternity who felt that Pradeep deserved it more, similarly Sahir got more recognition all along as a poet among us lyricists. But I sincerely feel that there is not only greater variety in my work but also more innovation.*

His film career spanned over fifty years. During this period, he wrote multi subject and multi shade songs. Immemorable songs written for **CID**, **Paying Guest**, **Tumsa Nahi Dekha**, **Kali Topi Lal Rumal**, **Kala Pani**, **Arzoo**, **Mere Sanam** stand testimony to his genius.

The Best of Majrooh Sultanpuri

### Song

*Babuji dhire chalna*  
*Aankhon hi aankhon mein ishara ho gaya*  
*Mana janab ne pukara nahi*  
*Chahunga mein tujhe*  
*Kabhi to milegi*  
*Jaane kahan mera*

### Song

*Aankhon hi aankhon mein*  
*Kabhi aar Kabhi paar*  
*Ab kya missal doon*  
*Chod do aanchal*  
*Udhar tum hasin ho*  
*Yaad aa gayi woh nashili nigahen*  
*Chori ho gaye raat*

### Movie

Aar Paar  
 C.I.D.  
 Paying Guest  
 Dosti  
 Aarti  
 Mr. & Mrs. 55

### Movie

C.I.D.  
 Aar Paar  
 Aarti  
 Paying Guest  
 Mr. & Mrs. 55  
 Manzil  
 Ishaara

## Awards & Honours:

He has been felicitated and honoured in India, Russia, USA, France, England, Canada, Mauritius and West Asia. In India he received awards mentioned below:



**Award****Contribution**

Iqbal Samman

Madhya Pradesh Government's highest award

Dada Sahab Phalke Award

Government of India's highest award in the field of Cinema

Film Writers Association Award

Indian Film Industry

Film Journalist Award

Film writing

Uttar Pradesh Hindi-Urdu Sahitya Award

Hindi and Urdu Literature

All India Journalist Award

Writings

Undoubtedly he was Sultan of Shayars. A sample below proves it:

*“Hamaare baad ab mehfil mein afsaane bayaan honge,  
Bahaaren humko dhoondengi, na jaane hum kahan honge;  
Na hum honge, na tum hoge, na dil hoga magar phir bhi,  
Hazaaron manzilen honghi, hazaaron caravan honge.”*

— Film **Baaghi**- 1953



# DILIP KUMAR

## Tragedy King of Indian Cinema

*“I’ve always scanned showbusiness for a decent script. What I’ve refused to do is to show my wares to financiers, that would have been too humiliating. If I haven’t been able to do anything in the parallel cinema, it’s because there has never been a serious offer. I do not approve of cinema that floats above the head even though it may be imparting a new film grammar. What I value deeply in the service done by New Theatres, Prabhat, Bombay Talkies, Minerva Movietone, Mehboob Khan. I’m afraid I belong to the old school but without bias or prejudice towards any other school. Live and let live. Personally I’ve learnt a lot from looking at Satyajit Ray’s films. I’ve understood some though not all of Ingmar Bergman’s oeuvre, I’ve admired Vittorio De Sica immensely, I’ve appreciated Fellini and Truffaut”.*

— Dilip Kumar

Dilip Kumar (birth name Mohammad Yusuf Khan) was born in the family of a leading fruit merchant Sarwar Khan in Peshawar on 11<sup>th</sup> December 1922. Later on the family alongwith 12 siblings shifted to Bombay (now Mumbai).

Dilip Kumar’s education at the Anjuman-e-Islam High School and St. Xavier’s college in Mumbai did not meet a fruitful end and leaving his education incomplete he started assisting in his family business which too proved to be a short lived stint as some confrontation and fight with his father paved his way for his escape to Poona where he worked in an army canteen (According to one version as an Assistant manager and according to another as a boy laying the table).

Least inclined to film or acting, Yusuf had a chance meeting with Devika Rani, the proprietor of Bombay Talkies and the leading female star in those days and as per dictates of the destiny he was offered an assignment with her Bombay Talkies and it was she on whose advice he selected his screen name Dilip Kumar out of three options – Jehangir, Basudev and Dilip Kumar – offered to him. He made his debut in the Film **Jwar Bhata** in 1944. Bombay Talkies’s best days were almost over following Himanshu Rai’s death. Older stalwarts like Ashok Kumar, S. Mukherjee and a few others had already left to form Filmistan. The film **Jwar Bhata** proved an average film at the box office, giving main credit to Agha.



Thereafter, Dilip Kumar started climbing the ladder of success with stunningly powerful performances. After playing lead role in two Bombay Talkies films he was cast in **Jugnu** (1947) opposite Noorjehan – the singing star and it was a grand success. This established and consolidated his position in the film industry.

In **Mela** (1948) with its beautiful and soul stirring song *Ae mere dil kaheen aur chal* Dilip Kumar's position was further strengthened and *Andaz* (1949) – a Mehboob Khan production catapulted him to the position of a Superstar.

Dilip Kumar played the role of a doomed lover in **Andaz**, **Babul** (1950), **Jogan** (1950), **Deedar** (1951) **Udan Khatola** (1955) and **Devdas**.

In **Babul**, **Deedar**, **Daag**, **Tarana** he dies in the end of the story. Rambling aimlessly, bottle in hand he became the prototype of the mythical Greek hero who has been dealt a terrible blow by fate. In **Jogan**, a Kidar Sharma film, Dilip Kumar plays an agnostic whose arguments collapse in the face of a true believer's faith. His portrayal of doomed lover in **Dil Diya Dard liya** speaks of his enormous talent..

Performing very serious and gloomy roles started pervading his psyche and made him severely depressed. He failed to come out of the characters he was playing and this problem was reported to his drama coach W.D. Nicol who gave him psychiatric explanations for the dilemma. He underwent psychoanalysis under Dr. Ramanlal Patel who suggested him a constant company instead of loneliness which would help him regain stability and poise.

He refused to act in Guru Dutt's classic **Pyasa** (1957) on the plea that he was already doing Bimal Roy's **Devdas** and similar characterization and repetition in both films would be unfair to both directors.

Similarly he declined 20<sup>th</sup> Century offer of **The Rains Come** and David Lean's offers of the role which ultimately went to Omer Sharif in **Lawrence of Arabia** (1962).

On psychiatric advice he switched over to do more light hearted musical films to sooth his strained nerves like **Azad** and **Koh-e-noor** (1960).

Though called Tragedy King, he was adept at doing any role and his performances have been regarded as the epitome of emoting in Indian Cinema.

His versatility can be seen in the different variety of films viz: lightweight **Shabnam** (1949), Intense **Andaz** (1949), Ultra serious **Daag** (1952), Swash buckling **Aan** (1952), Heavy **Devdas** (1955), Entertainer **Azad** (1955)

**Mughal-e-Azam** (1960) and **Ganga Jamuna** (1961) marked the peak of Dilip Kumar's career. His performance as Salim in the former has been rated as his best



even though he actually looks strangely uncomfortable in the film whereas in the latter the rendering is flawless and perhaps greatest of his career. His Bhojpuri dialect in the film was perfect.

He married Saira Banu in 1966 after his celebrated affairs with some of the leading heroines of the day, Kamini Kaushal, Madhubala and Vijayanti Mala. Saira Bano co-starred with him in **Gopi** (1970) produced at Madras (now Chennai) but his career started facing reversal of fortunes by that time. He was fully marginalized after that. But reinventing himself Dilip Kumar made a triumphant comeback in Hindi cinema in the 1980, an era otherwise fully dominated by Amitabh Bachchan.

**Kranti** (1981), **Shakti** (1982), **Vidhata** (1982), **Duniya** (1984) stand testimony to his grand return and Subhash Ghai directed **Vidhata** narrated the tale of his clash with his best friend Shammi Kapur, and it was a tremendous success. **Duniya** was another tale of revenge. In **Shakti** his larger than life author backed role conformed his legendary status. To quote Salim Khan one of the writers of the film – “We were amazed that he has given a whole new dimension to the character we had written. It happens very rarely that you have a competent script and the film goes beyond your imagination... Dilip Kumar understood the character and enhanced it in his own way”. **Shakti** was perhaps Director Ramesh Sippy’s best film. But, unfortunately it proved to be a box office failure but won Dilip Kumar yet another Filmfare Award for best actor.

Since early in his film career he got keenly interested in film making but he was not in a hurry. This desire fructified in 1961 with the making of **Ganga Jamuna**. This film was directed by Nitin Bose. **Ganga Jamuna** was the story of two brothers on the two sides of law and Dilip Kumar played the role of elder brother to his own brother, Nasir Khan. This film turned out to be one of Dilip Kumar’s big hits for which he received acclaim as the Best actor from various institutions whilst Nitin Bose received the National Award as Best Director of 1961.

## Awards & Honours:

He received a total of 8 Best Actor filmfare awards in films **Daag** (1953), **Azad** (1955), **Devdas** (1956), **Naya Daur** (1957), **Koh-e-noor** (1960), **Leader** (1964), **Ram Aur Shyam** (1967), **Shakti** (1982). Lifetime Achievement Award in 1993, Screen Videocon Award and Ramnath Goenka Smriti Award in 1998 are other prestigious awards.

He also won thrice the BFJA Awards for best actor: **Ganga Jamuna** in 1961, **Sangharsh** in 1968 and **Sagina Mahato (Bengali)** in 1970. In 1995 he was crowned with the Dadasaheb Phalke Award.



Level of performance, quality of craftsmanship, refreshing enaction of roles, handsome and vulnerable face, the timber in the voice and the hesitant wringing of hands personified a career that has rarely compromised with quality.

Some of his popular films include **Andaz**, **Devdas**, **Naya Daur**, **Madhumati**, **Mughal-e-Azam**, **Ganga Jamuna**, **Ram or Shyam** and **Shakti**.

### Awards and Honours:

Apart from silver screen achievements, he has been conferred various social honours and awards. He has served as the Sheriff of Bombay during the year 1990, Padma Bhushan in 1991 and had been nominated to Rajya Sabha in 1993, He received Nishan-e-Imtiyaz from Pakistan Government in 1998.

**BFJA Awards:** **Ganga Jamuna** (1961), Best Actor, (1968), **Sungharsh** – Best Actor, 1970 – **Sagina Mahato** (Bengali) (1970) – Best Actor.

### Major Awards

Year	Film	Award
1995		Dadasaheb Phalke Award
1993		Filmfare Lifetime Achievement Award
1982	Shakti	Filmfare Award : Best Actor
1967	Ram Aur Shyam	Filmfare Award : Best Actor
1964	Leader	Filmfare Award : Best Actor
1960	Kohinoor	Filmfare Award : Best Actor
1957	Naya Daur	Filmfare Award : Best Actor
1956	Devdas	Filmfare Award : Best Actor
1955	Azad	Filmfare Award : Best Actor
1953	Daag	Filmfare Award : Best Actor

### Filmography:

*Jwar Bhata (1944), Pratima (1945), Milan (1946), Jugnu (1947), Anokha Pyar, Ghar Ki Izzat, Mela, Nadiya Ke Paar, Shaheed (1948), Andaz, Shabnam (1949), Arzoo, Babul, Jogan (1950), Deedar, Hulchul, Tarana (1951), Aan, Daag, Sangdil (1952), Footpath, Shikast (1953), Amar (1954), Azad, Devdas, Insaniyat, Udan Khatola (1955), Musafir, Naya Daur (1957), Madhumati, Yahudi (1958), Paigham (1959), Kohinoor, Mughal-e-Azam (1960), Ganga Jamuna (1961), Leader (1964),*



*Dil Diya Dard Liya (1966), Ram aur Shyam (1967), Aadmi, Sadhu aur Shaitan (Guest), Sanghursh (1968), Gopi (1970), Anokha Milan, Dastan, Koshish (Guest) (1972), Phir Kab Milogi, Sagina (1974), Bairaag (1976), Kranti (1981), Shakti, Vidhata (1982), Mazdoor (1983), Duniya, Mashaal (1984), Dharm Adhikari, Karma (1986), Kanoon Apna Apna (1989), Izzatdaar (1990), Saudagar (1991), Qila (1998).*



# RAJ KUMAR

## Perfectionist to the Core

**B**ORN in Gajanur, Karnataka, in 1929 Kannada Superstar Dr. Raj Kumar had to his credit over 200 films – that approximately comprises 25% of the Kannada industry. Starting out young, he played Arjuna as a child actor in the stage spectacular **Kurukshetra (1924)**. His first adult breakthrough, came through R. Nagendra Rao and Subbiah Naidu's theatre company, playing Narada in **Bhukailasa** (repeating the role in K. Shankar's 1958 film version) and Ramakant in **Ambarish**. His debut in films was with Gubbi Virnna's **Bedara Kanappa** in the year 1954 and before he retired in 1994, he had acted in over 200 movies, with a very high success ratio. **Bedara Kannapa** established him as a mythological hero overcoming the severest tests of conscience to prove his devotion to his ideals.

He formed a loose collective with G.V. Iyer T.V. Singh Thakore, Balkrishna, Narasimharaju, et al. called the Kannada Film Artists' Association, which produced a film **Ranadheera Kantheerava**. Although the group did not survive, it became the nucleus for Kannada film industry.

His image, mainly moulded by G.V. Iyer, was politicized into a quest for Karnataka's cultural glory. The bulk of his historicals (**Ranadheera Kantheerava**, **Immadi Pulikeshi**) and mythologicals were geared to a populist, regional – chauvinist Dravidian feudalism's resistance to the North Indian agrarian systems.

He expanded the idiom from the early mythological into the contemporary with **Bangarada Manushya**. In films, his persona takes upon himself all the burdens, which in Tamil films would be distributed across several figures. His effectiveness is illustrated by the way he modulates his performances from the historical to the mythological (**Shri Kanmika Parmeswari Kathe**), from contemporary melodrama (**Karulina Kare**) to James Bond thrillers. (**Goadalli CID 999** and his **Dorairaj – Bhagwan** films).

Tamil thespian Shivaji Ganeshan after watching **Bhaktha Kumbhara** is believed to have said that – nobody can repeat Rajkumar's mesmerizing performance in the film. Also an acclaimed singer, he has won the national award for his song in the film **Jeevan Chaitra**. His devotional albums in association with Udayshankar are very popular and almost all Kannada films include at least one number by him.

His early retirement, that, too after his last film **Oda Huttidavary** which was a silver jubilee hit, stunned his great fan following. In one interview, when he was



asked, that at the time when elderly artistes like Sivaji Ganesan, Dev Anand, Dilip Kumar and Nageswara Rao were still active, why should he turn away from the screen. He said that he had the greatest respect for these artists who were great performers and he felt privileged to be in such company, even if he was from Karnataka. He said he was waiting for the story that could haunt and inspire him. Another reason of his retirement was a severe knee problem which took a long time to heal.

Rajkumar, variously called as Kannadada Kanmani (Kannada's darling), Natasaarvabhouma (king among actors) and Annavru (elder brother) passed away on April 12, 2006 at the age of 77.

There are stars, but very few star institutions as was Rajkumar. In the Kannada film industry, he was the ultimate. In terms of public adulation and identification, he was peerless. There is not a second star in the country whose hold over the mass psyche was so complete.

He appeared in a great variety of roles, historical, mythological, romantic and suspense. It is significant that he has never been seen on the screen either smoking or drinking. He has just one negative role to his credit, as villain in **Hiranya Kashyap**. One of his most outstanding performance was in **Shanker Guru**, in which he essayed a triple role.

He retired after making 200 films to become a producer promoting his sons Shivraj Kumar (introduced as hero in Sangeetham Srinivasa Rao's **Anand**, 1986) and Raghvendra Rajkumar. However, the 72-year old star did come out of his self imposed exile at the behest of his fans to star in **Shabdavedi**, which recently celebrated its silver jubilee week. His fans, who treat him like a demi-God, had rolled on the streets and staged *dharnas* before his residence till the thespian consented to act again.

He was known for his simplicity and generosity. A kind-hearted and peace loving person his contribution to the film industry is incredible. He served his whole life for the growth of the Kannada cinema industry. His devotional songs have a touch of class. Needless to say he created history in Kannada Cinema industry which will never fade off.

## Awards & Honours:

He was awarded numerous state, national and international awards. He was a recipient of Padma Bhushan and a doctorate from Mysore University, and won a number of awards including the prestigious Karnataka Rathna Award recognizing him as a 'Jewel' of Kannada films. In 1995 he received prestigious Dadasaheb Phalke Award for his outstanding contribution to the Kannada film industry.

Rajkumar was abducted on July 30, 2000, from his ancestral home by forest brigand Veerappan. He was released without harms after 109 days of captivity.



## Filmography:

*Bedara Kannappa (1954), Bhakth Vijaya (1956), Rayara Sose, Sati Nalayni (1957), Anna Thangi, Bhookalias, Krishna Garadi (1958), Dharma Vijaya, Jagathjyothi, Bhasveswara, Mahishasura Mardini (1959), Kannu Theredu Nodu, Kittur Chennamma, Nagarjuna, Sri Saila Mahatmye (1961), Vidhi Vilasa (1962), Pratingne, Sivarathri Mohatyam, Naandi, Anna Poorna, Chandavalliya Thotam Huriyada Mane, Navakoti Naryana, Sivagange Mahatme, Thumbida Koda (1964), Mali Madhuve Kaviratina, Sant Thukarama, Valmiki, Veerakesari, Kalitwaru Henne, Hana Mechida Madadi, Nanda Deepa, Sri Rama Anjeneya Yudha, Sathi Sakth (1963), Mahasati Anasuya, Pathivratha, Sarvaja Murthy, Vatsalya, Sathya Harishchandra, Bettada Huli, Chandrashasa, Idai Mahasudina, Maduve Madi Nodu, Sathi Savithri (1965), Mohini Bismasura, Thoogu Deepa, Balanagamma, Emmay Thammanna, Sri Kanyaka Parameswari Kathe, Katheri Veera, Kiladi Ranga, Madhu Malathi, Manthralaya Mahatheme, Premahayi (1966), Rajasekara, Immadi Pulikesh, Chakra Therratha, Bangarada Hoovu, Beedhi Basavanna, Devara Gedda Manava, Gange Gowri, Langa Pathirke, Manassiddare Harga, Parvathi Kalyana, Rajadurgaa Rahasya, Sathi Sukanya (1967), Dhoomekethu, Bangalore Hail, Rowdi Renganna, Amma, Bhagyada Bagilu, Bhagyadevathe, Gandhinagara, Goadalli CID 999, Hannelle Chiguridaga, Jedarabale, Mahasati Arundhati, Manasakshi, Mannina Maga, Sarvamangala, Simha Swapna (1968), Bhale Raja, Choori Chikkanna, Mallahamana Pavada, Marga Darishi, Operation Jackpot, Nalli CID 999, Punar Janma, Bhageerathi, Chikkamma, Gandondur Hennaru, Hayor Muttanna, Uyyale (1969), Bale Jodi, Balu Belagithu, Bhoopathi Ranga, CID Rajanna, Devara Hakkalu, Hasiru Thorana, Sri Krishnadevaya, Karulina Kare, Mr. Rajkumar, Nasuna Thamma, Paropari (1970), Bala Bandana, Kasiddare Kailasa, Kasthuri Nivasa, Sri Krishna Rukmani, Satyabhama, Gula Gowrava, Namma Sansara, Nyaayave Devaru, Prathidwani, Saakshaakara, Thayl Devari (1971), Bale Hucha, Bangaruda Manushya, Kranthi Veera, Hrudaya Sanghama, Jaga Metchida Naga, Janha Rahasya, Nandagogula, Sipai Rama (1972), Swayamvara, Bidugude, Devaru Kotta Thangi, Doorada Betta, Gandhada Gudi, Mooruvare Vajrgalu (1973), Sampathigay Saval, Bhaktha Kumbhara, Yeradu Kanasu, Sri Srinivasa Kalyana, Bangarada Panjara (1974), Mayoora, Tharithappaitha Haga, Thrimoorthy (1975), Bhadur Sanadi Appanna, Olavau Gelavu, Girikanye, Bhagya Santhra (1977), Sankar Guru, Thayige Thakka Maga, Operation Diomand Rocket (1978), Hulia Halina Hevu, Nanobba Kalla (1979), Ravi Chandra, Vasantha Geetha (1980), Havina Hedde, Keralida Simha, Nee Nann a Gellarare, Chanchala (1981), Hosa Belaku, Hallu Jenu, Chalisuvamodagalo (1982), Yeradu Nakshatragari, Kavirathna Kalidasa, Kaamanabillo, Bhaktha Prahalada (1983), Yaarivanu, Sravana Bhanthu, Samayaa Gombe, Apporva Sangama (1984), Jwalamukhi, Dhruva Thare, Adhe Kannu (1985), Guri, Bhagyada Lakshmi Baaramma (1986), Devatha Manushya, Shiva Mechida Kannappa (1988), Ondu Muthina Kathe, Shruthi Seridaga (1987), Parsurama (1989), Seevana Chaitra (1992), Akasmika (1993), Oda Huttidavaru (1994).*



# SIVAJI GANESAN

## A Saga of Phenomenal Success

**T**HE famous cine star of the South Indian movie firmament, a household name, was born at Vellapuram village near Madras (Now Chennai) on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1928. His phenomenal rise in the film world brought pleasant surprise to his parents. Since his early childhood he had a natural inclination towards theatre and cinema. When he was seven years old, a traveling drama troupe came to Viluppuram. Sivaji acted as one of the soldiers in the play. His father was appalled that he had acted in some cheap drama and that too in a white man's part. He was lambasted and punished prompting his departure from his home. He joined a drama troupe Yadharathanam Ponnuswamy and company touring Tiruchi. He told the owner that he was an orphan and incidentally found a shelter. Here he honed his talents for music and dancing. He learnt Bharatnatyam, Kathak, Kathakali and even Manipuri and also trained in Carnatic music. As he moved from troupe to troupe, his reputation as an actor grew. He enacted female characters in the theatre in the initial phase of his career. His mesmerising voice and the range played a decisive role in establishing him as a prominent figure in his group.

He had played a memorable role of Chatrapati Shivaji in C.N. Annadurai's **Shivaji Kanda Hindu Samrayam**. He was asked to play the role at the last moment when the lead actor backed out. It is said that he memorized the entire 25 pages of dialogues in a day. His performance in the play was marvelous and people started calling him Sivaji.

The story of Sivaji Ganesan was a saga of success. In his twenties Sivaji got an offer to play a lead role in **Parasakthi** (1952) by P.A. Perumal Mudaliar of National Pictures. The film is one of the most controversial films in the history of Tamil cinema, replete with assonant monologues. It owed its success in large part to its dialogues written by Karunanidhi who used the film to express his ideas on religion, god and priesthood. The success of film not only made Sivaji a star, but also the official icon of the DMK party for some years. He acted in at least 300 or more movies after **Parasakthi**. In most of these films he was a lead hero and made special appearances too in Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam films. He also acted in a few Hindi movies.

Sivaji Ganesan is forthright on his concept of acting:



*“What is acting? It means doing something that is not natural. So then where is the question of overacting? When your mother dies, what do you do? You shout Amma and cry don’t you? Your instant reaction is to cry aloud, not sit quietly covering your eyes with your hands. That’s exactly what I do in my films”.*

Sivaji Ganesan played every conceivable character on screen – son, father, brother, hero, anti-hero, action and comedy in social, political, historical and mythological perspectives with equal efficiency and naturalness. He lived the character he enacted. He was endowed with a good physique, an expressive face capable of portraying every human emotion. Sivaji was renowned for his emotional characters, having the uncanny ability to make audiences weep over his portrayal of tragic characters.

Sivaji Ganesan was very punctual. Even while working with a junior artiste he remained on set, in full make up. He said *“I have to see what the others are doing, only then can I know how to do my own role, my scene”* – This reveals his working method “Sivaji was very convincing and realistic in his earlier films – in the fifties and the early sixties”. But he became stylized and flamboyant actor during his stardom days. In the nineties, he went back to the subtle, controlled style of acting. His flamboyance was adopted by many actors but only Rajnikant succeeded in making it watchable as he devoured Sivaji’s acting method in its entirety. Rajni and Satyaraj used Sivaji as the encyclopaedia for acting. Rajnikant called him the ‘Emperor of style’. Satyaraj said in an interview, “when you think about it, we know of historical characters in what Sivaji Ganesan showed us – be it Subramanya Bharati, or Rajaraja Cholan or Kappal Ottiya Thamuzhan, Chidambaram Pillai or Veera Pandiya Kattabomman.

Towards his final days, when he was asked about his plans he said:

*“Plans are for businessmen. I am an actor, I will always remain an actor, what was my ambition when I started is the same now. I still want to be a good actor”.*

Sivaji was vastly imitated but never equalled. His eyes had fire and was cheered for his resounding voice which the audience called ‘Simmakural’ or a lion’s roar. He is perhaps the only actor in India to have appeared in 282 films in a span of 45 years, honoured by a large number of public bodies and revered by the majority of film fans. He was President of South Indian Artistes Association for eight years during which he constructed a big auditorium for public dramas and Mini Projection theatre. Sivaji contributed huge amounts to various charitable institutions and for a national cause.

Sivaji Ganesan received as much accolades and equally strong criticism for his histrionic abilities. He never achieved the national status he deserved. It is perhaps



a reflection of the complexities of the language of his mother tongue that required strong grammar, poetic undertones and louder decibels of dialogue delivery. Film critics and audience forming the majority in North of the Vindayas who were used to much softer subtle portrayal found it difficult to applaud Sivaji's daredevilary in character's action roles he depicted in the film career. Had he been born out of the Dravidian state and culture, he would have been kept in high esteem as the best actor Indian cinema ever produced. It is indeed a misfortune that Pt. Nehru pleaded ignorance of the actor when President Nasir of Egypt enquired about him after seeing his stellar performance in – "Veerapandia Kattabomman" in the Cairo film festival. Nehru did make amends when he made Sivaji the main host when Nasir visited India.

Sivaji Ganesan was never considered to be a stylish actor by his critics. Style for men was always associated with their wardrobe, poise and sophistication of their linguistic abilities and perhaps certain habits they carried on to give the added punch. Sivaji knowing his limitations used his "walk" to bring in the style, whether it is the majestic walk in **Thiruvilayadal**, or the over confident one in **Saraswathi Sabatham** or the humble one is **Thiruvaruteselvar** or the millionaire's arrogant walk in **Navarathri**, or the *Bridge on the River Kwai*- inspired walk in **Thangapadakkam**. Shivaji answered his critics for his lack of style by walking. In some instances he added another dimension to the walk by using a walking stick. See him do that in soulful **Ponnal Pogattum Poctapaalum Poozhamum** or move forward to see the swing of the stick in **Antha naal gnbagam – Uyarantha, Manitham**.

Sivaji was criticized for his lack of sophistication, smoked in his films to bring style into his characters. In a film **Shanthi**, the music masters Viswanathan – Ramammurthy came out with the astounding composition, a Cliff Richard like number, with the continuous strumming of the bass, rhythm and Jazz guitars (song: *Yaar Antha Nilavu*). This song produced the magic of the three musketeers **Viswanathan, Kannadasan** and **Sunderayan** and they did produce a masterpiece. Sivaji, who usually remained present in the recording missed it and got to know about this song and requested director K.Shanker for more time to film this sequence. The musketeers waiting to find what he was going to do, were simply dumb founded when Sivaji came out singing the entire solo number, mimicking the song by smoking a cigarette. The entire efforts of the trio were sidelined and till date it is Sivaji who got associated with the song and it beats every imagination to know that he produced a masterpiece with a cigarette stub. Look at him smoke the cigarillo in the song sequence **Paartha Gnabagam Illayo – Pudiya Paraval** or go back to **Paar Magle Paar** where he smoked with a cigarette-holder, move forward to cigar in **Gnnana Oli** or the pipe in **Gauravam** or just stoop down to the beedi in **Bale Paandiya**. If smoking is a bad example, watch him eat peanuts in **Aandavan Kattalai** or the different dimensions of laughter in the way to dusty death in Crime chiller **Antha Naal** or the way he



picked up the – rickshaw handle with his left leg in the film **Babu**. Sivaji perhaps used his power of observation, mixed it with his creative intelligence and produced these characters with the sophistication and style they deserved.

In most cinemas physically handicapped persons are normally characterized as downtrodden to gain public sympathy. Sivaji, on the other hand, used physical deformation to the character's advantage. Watch him in the evergreen – **Allayamani** where he used the wheel chair. In fact so sophisticated was his maneuvering of the wheelchair that it became a part of himself and nobody missed his majestic walk in the film. See him in **Paarthali Pasitheerum** as an injured soldier who has a hop in his walk. In the entire film he never missed the frequency of the hop.

You can't beat Sivaji when it comes to the playing musical instruments. Contrast his sax in the interlude of **Unnai Onru Ketpen** – Puthiya Paravai to the nadaswaram in **Thillana Moganambal** or just see him play the guitar with a breeze in **Naan Kavignanum Illai Padithaal Mattum Poduma**. In one instance, when Viswanathan played the piano himself for a song in **Passa Malar** he was astonished by the way Sivaji delivered the piano scene – what Viswanathan was not Sivaji, but himself. Sivaji had watched Viswanathan play the piano during the recording and reproduced the act like magic.

Although Sivaji's prime time ended in the 60s there were occasional sparks in the 70s and 80s that lit up the entire tinsel world, whether he came in as the Inspector General of Police in **Thangapadakkam** or the Bar-at-law in **Gauram** or a retired middle class civil servant in **Vietnam Veedu**. No one remembers him but these characters. It was unfortunate that producers and directors had commercial propositions overlooking his real value to make blunders like **Pilot Premnath**, **Hitler Umanath**, **Mirudanga Chakravorty** and **Lorry driver Rajkumar**.

### Awards & honours:

In 1966, he was awarded Padmashree. The Maharashtra State Government Stage Award to be given to the best actor each year is named the Sivaji Ganesan Award. He was nominated to Rajya Sabha in 1983, and remained a member till 1986. In 1984, Padmabhushan was conferred upon him, and in 1986, he received the special Jury Award at the National Award Function, for his role in **Devar Magan**. He inaugurated the 26<sup>th</sup> International film festival of India held at Mumbai in 1995.

One of the great achievements was to have been awarded the title of **Chevalier** by the Government of France. The French ambassador to India. Mr. Philip Petit specially visited Chennai to present the title and medallion to him.

In 1977, the well known Tamil daily *Dinakaran* honoured him with lifetime achievement Award.

Dadasaheb Phalke Award was conferred upon him in the year 1997.



## Filmography:

*Parasakthi, Panam (1952), Paradesi (Telugu), Poongodhai, Thirumpi Paar, Anbu, Kangal, Pempudu Koduko (Telugu), Manithanam Mirugamum, (1953), Manohara, Illara Jyothi, Andhannal, Kalyanam Panniyum Brahmachari, Manohar (Hindi), Manohara (Telugu), Thulivizham, Koondulkili, Thookku Thooki, Edhirparadhandhu (1954), Cauveri, Mudhal Thedhi, Ulagam Palavidham, Mangaya Thilakam, Kotteeswaran, Kalvanin Kadhali (1955), Cauveri, Mudhal Thedhi, Ulgam Palavidham, Mangaya Thilakam, Kotteeswaran, Kalvanin Kadhali (1955), Naan Petra Selvam, Nallaveedu, Nane Raja, Thenali Raman, Penin Perumail, Rajarani, Amaradeepam, Vazhville Oru Naal, Rangoon Radha (1956), Parasakthi (Telugu), Makkal Petra Maharasi, Vanangamudi, Pudhayal, Manamagan Thevai, Thangamalai Rahasiyam, Rani Lalithangi, Ambikarathi, Bhagyavathi (1957), Bommala Pelli (Telugu), Uthama Puthiran, Pathibhakti, Sampoorana Ramayanam, Bommai Kalayanam, Annayin Aanai, Saragadhara, Sabhash Meena, Kathavarayan (1958), Thangapadhumai, Naan Sollum Rahasiyam, Veera Pandya Kattabomman, Matragadham, Awal Yaar, Bagapirivinai (1959), Irumbu Thirai, Kuravanji, Deivapira, Rajabhakthi, Padikatha Mehia, Pavai Vilakku, Petramanam, Vidi Velli (1960), Pava Mannippu, Punar Janman, Paramalar, Ellam Unakkaga, Sri Valli, Marudanttu Veeran, Palum Pazhamum, Kappalottiya Thamizhan (1961), Parthal Pasi Theerum, Nitchaya Thamboolam, Valarpirai, Pandithal Mattam Podhuma, Bhale Pandia, Vadivukku Valiakappu, Senthamarai, Bandha Passam, Alayamani (1962), Chittor Rani Padmini, Arivali, Iruvar Ullam, Naan Vananum Deivam, Kulamagal Radhai, Paar Magale Paar, Kungumam, Raktha thilakam, Kalyaniyin Kanavan, Annai Illam (1963), Karnan, Pachai Vilakku, Andavan Kattalai, Kavkodhutha Deivam, Pudhiya Paravai, Muradan Muthu, Navarathri (1964), Pazhani, Anbu Karangal, Santhi, thiruvilayadal, Neelavanamm (1965), Motor Sundaram Pillai, Mahakavi Kalidas, Saraswati Sapadham, Selvam (1966), Kandhan Karunai, Nenjirukkum Varai, Pesum Deviam, Thangai, Paaladia, Thiruvarutselvam, Iru Malargal, Ootyvarai Uravu (1967), Thirumal Perumail, Harischandra, Galata Kalyanam, En Thambi, Thillana Mohanambal, Engaoor Raja, Lakshmi Kalyanam, Uyartha Manithan (1968), Anbalippu, Thanga Churanga, Kaval Deviam, Guru Datshani, Anjalpetti 520, Niraikudam, Devia Magam, Thirudan, Sivantha Mann (1969), Enga Mama, Dharti (Hindi), Vilayattu Pillai, Vietnam Veedu, Ethiorili, Raman Ethanai Ramanadi, Engirundho Vandhal, Sorgam, Padhukappu (1970), Irru Durvam, Thangaikaga, Arunodhayam, Kulama Gunama, Praptham, Sumathi En Sundari, Savale Samali, Thenum Paalum, Moondru Deivangal, Babu (1971), Raja, Gnan Oli, Pattikada Pattanama, Dharam Enge, Thava Pudhavlavan, Vasantha Maligai, Needhi (1972), Bharadha Vilas, Raja Raja Chozhan (Scope), Ponnonjal, Engal Thanga Raja, Gowravan, Manitharil, Manichkam, Rajapart Rangadurai (1973), Sivagamiyin Selvan, Thai, Vani, Rani, Thangapathakkam, En Magan, Anbai Thedi (1974),*



*Manithanum Deivamagalam, Avanthan Manithan, Mannavan Vandhanadi, Anbe Aaruyire Vaira Nenjam, Doctor Siva, Pattum Bharadhamum (1975), Unakkaga Naan, Graha Pravesam, Sathyam, Uthaman, Chitra Pournami, Rojavin Raja (1976), Avan Oru Sarithiram, Deepam, Elayathalaimurai, Naam Oru Kovil, Annan Oru Kovil (1977), Andhaman Kadhali, Thiyagam, Ennai Pol Oruvan, Punniya Bhoomi, Genral Chakaravarthi, Thacholi Amvu (Malayam), Pilot Premnath, Justice Gopinath (1978), Thirisoolam, Kaviri Maan, Nalladhoru Kudambam, Imayam, Naan Vazhavaippen, Pattakathi Bhairavan, Vetrikku Oruvan (1979), Rishmoolam, Dharma Raja, Yaman, Raktha Paasam, Vishwa Roopam (1980), Mothana Punnaigai, Sathya Sundaram, Amara Kaviyam, Kal thoon, Lorry Driver, Madi Veetu Ezhai, Keezhavanam, Sivakkum (1981), Hitler Umanath, Oorukka Oru Pillai, Vaa Kanna Vaa, Garuda Sowkiyama, Sangili, Vasandhathil Oru Naal; Theerpu, Nivuru Gappina Nippu (Telugu), Thiyagi, Thunai, Paritchaikku Neramachu Oorum Uravam, Nenjangal (1982), Bezawada Bebbuli (Telugu), Neethipathi, Imagigal, Sandhippu, Sumangali, Mirudhanga Chakravarthi, Vellai Roja, (1984), Bandham, Naamiruvar, Padikatha Pannaiyar, Neetiyain Nizhal, Nermail, Mudhal Mariyadhai, Raja Rishi, Padikadhavan (1985), Sadhanai, Marumagal, Ananda Kanneer, Viduthali, Thaikku Oru Tha Lattu, Lakshmi Vandhachu, Mannukkul Vairam (1986), Raja Mariyadhai, Kudumbam Oru Kavil, Muthikkal Moondru, Veera Pandian, Anbulla Appa, Viswanatha Nayakudu (Telugu), Agni Puthrudu (Telugu), Krishnan Vandhan, Jallikkattu, Dhampathyam (1987), En Thamizh En Makkal, Pudhiya Vaanam (1988), Gnana Paravai (1991), Nangal, Chinna Marumagal, Madhul Kurul (1992), Parambaryam (1993), Pasupon (1995) Once More (1997), En Aasai Rasavey (1998).*

### **As Guest Appearance:**

*School Master (Kannada) (1958), Thayai Poola Pillai N. Selai, School Master (Hindi) (1959), Kuzhandhaigal Kanda Kudiyarasu, Pilau Technia Chellani Rajy (Telugu), Makkala Rajya (Kannada) (1960), Ramadasu (Telugu), School Master (Kanada) (1964), Thayne Unakkaga (1966), Bangaru Bagu (Telugu), Bhaktha Thukaram (Telugu) (1973), Cinema Paithiya (1975), Jeevana Dheeralu (Telugu) Chanakkya Chandra Gupta (Telugu) (1977), Natchathiram (1980), Uruvangal Maralam (1983), Devar Magan (1992), Raja Kumaran (1994).*



# PRADEEP

## A Patriot in Real Sense

**P**RADEEP was born at Bandanagar near Ujjain in the then Central Provinces (present day Madhya Pradesh) on February 6<sup>th</sup>, 1915. Since his early childhood he showed keen appreciation and love for poetry. He graduated from Lucknow University and came to Mumbai in 1939 and stayed with a family friend N.R. Acharya – Bombay Talkies’ production manager. Pradeep’s poems had enchanting effect on him and he introduced him to the noted film producer Himanshu Rai and his services were hired. He began his film career with writing songs for **Kangan** starring Ashok Kumar and Lila Chitnis and this opening heralded the inpouring of innumerable offers for song writing. He also gave his voice to some of his songs and cine world witnessed the emergence of a legend. After Himanshu Rai’s death, Sasadhar Mukherjee took over as a producer at Bombay Talkies and developed a very close relationship with Pradeep. He was put on monthly salary. Hit films viz. **Bandini**, **Jhoola**, **Naya Sansar**, **Kismet** had a considerable share of Pradeep’s songs for their success. Pradeep also received offers from elsewhere but he remained loyal to Bombay Talkies.

His gravitating towards freedom movement brought forth the immortal Quit India song for the film **Kismet**. Pradeep followed Mukherjee when he left Bombay Talkies to form Filmistan. Later on he provided lyrics for Bombay Talkies’ film **Mashal**. This film has a popular song *Upur Gagan Vishal*.

He wrote songs like *Sabarmati ke sant tune kar diya kamaal* for **Jagriti**. He penned songs for all time hit **Jai Santoshi Ma**. He dedicated his immortal song *Aye mere watan ke logon* to India’s brave soldiers. Melody queen Lata Mangeshkar rendered it at a function in Delhi to pay tributes to the soldiers who laid their lives defending India in 1962’s Indo-China war.

The music directors who teamed up with Pradeep to bring out immortal melodies were Sarawati Devi, Ramchandra Pal, Pannalal Ghosh, Anil Biswas, Ghulam Haider, S.D. Burman, C. Ramchandra, Hansram Bhagatram, Manna Dey, Roshan, Avinash Vyas, Hemant Kumar, N. Dutta, Chitragupt, Ajeet Merchant, Vasant Desai, Dataram, Shivarm, Salil Choudhary, S.N. Tripathi, Prem Dhawan, Laxmikant Pyarelal, Kalyanji Anandji, O.P. Nayyer, C. Arjun, Ravindra Jain, Bhupen Hazarika, Usha Khanna, Sudhir Pandke, R.D. Burman, Nadeem Shravan, Sapan Jagmohan, Sonik Omi, Bhappi Lahiri and others.



The melody queen Lata at one of her live concerts, had publicly acknowledged Kavi Pradeep for his immortal song, *Aye mere watan ke logon*. She lamented the fact that the song earned her name and fame but the writer who penned the magic word had been neglected.

Pradeep wrote memorable songs for several hit films like **Kangan**, **Bandhan**, **Jhoola**, **Naya Sansar**, **Kismat**, **Punarmilan**, **Mashal**, **Nastik**, **Jagriti**, **Talaaq**, **Paigham**, **Sambandh**, **Chal Chal Re Naujawan**, **Vaman Avatar**, **Har Har Gange**, **Vasant Panchami**, **School Master**, **Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose**, **Baap Beti**, **Nagin**, **Suhagan**, **Nagmani**, **Harishchandra** and **Taramati**, **Agni Pareeksha**, **Kabhi Dhoop Kabhi Chaon**, **Jai Santoshi Ma**, **Jai Bajrang Bali**.

Kavi Pradeep wrote about 1500 film and non-film songs, poems and bhajans, most of them with a patriotic fervour including *Chal chal re naujawan* and *Door hato aye duniyawalon*, *Hindustan hamara hai* (both from **Kismat**, India's first golden Jubilee hit) which stirred the soul of people during 1942 Quit India movement. His other non-film songs inspired freedom fighters. After independence he wrote songs to promote national integration bringing him the honour and title of 'Rashtra Kavi'.

Martyrdom of Bhagat Singh and Chandrashekhar left an indelible impression on his mind and initiated him into patriotic writing.

A few of his songs with strong patriotic fervour are *Chal chal re naujawan*, *Aao bachchon tumhen dikhaye jhanki Hindustan ki*, *Hum layen hain toofan se kishti nikal ke is desh ko rakhna mere bacchon sambhal ke*, *Dekh tere sansar ki haalat kya ho gai bhagwan kitna badal gaya insan*, *Insaan ka insaan se ho bhaichara yahi paigam hamara*, *Aaj ke is insaan ko kya ho gaya iska purana pyar kahan par kho gaya*, *Sabarmati ke sant tune kar diya kamal*, *Kahni hai ek baat hamein is desh ke pahredaron se sambhal ke rahna apne ghar mein chupe hue gaddaron se*.

## Awards & Honours:

- He was honoured with Sangeet Natak Academy Award and the title of Rashtra Kavi by the then President Rajendra Prasad. He said "I do not crave for awards. As long as my works have successfully infused patriotism in the minds and souls of Indians, my mission is fulfilled.
- Pradeep has lent his voice for *Dekh tere sansar ki halat kya ho gaye bhagwan* in Filmistan's **Nastik** and *Aao bachchon tumhen dikhaye jhanki Hindustan ki* from **Jagriti**. Thirty years ago, HMV also brought out an album of 13 songs written and sung by him.



- Pradeep's song *Aye mere watan ke logon*- a tribute to 1962 war martyrs was dedicated to the nation and it acquired the status of a national song. Many film producers wanted to use this song in their film but he flatly refused.

Other honours and awards those came his way are:

- Madhya Pradesh government award for the best film song and lyrics; Film Journalist Association Award; The IMPPA award; Rajiv Gandhi award; The Sursingar and National integration award; Sangeet Gyneshwar award and; Dadasaheb Phalke award for his lifetime contribution to Indian cinema.

Kavi Pradeep's personality was contrary to the impression imparted by his songs. Instead of being a person of intense and serious nature he was a social, loveable and a little impatient. He was very gentle and often underplayed his achievements. The song *Aye mere watan ke logon* filled him with a sense of oneness with the pavement dwellers while he was walking on the Matunga sidewalk. But in its final version the context and words got changed. While he wrote keeping in mind the benefit of mankind, he never criticized the writers of different theme though he tried to chastise them mildly.

*"I didn't waste my time writing only about sex, lust, love, romance and all that. Love is but a part of life, and the love written about today talks about love between the sexes only. But do young men and women have a monopoly where love is concerned? Aren't these different kinds of love – that between a mother and a child or a father and his children, between a brother and a sister, between a bhakt and his deity, between a man and his motherland? I choose to write about all these different kinds of love. The saint-poetess Mirabai wasn't married to Krishna but she loved him and spent her life singing about him. Perhaps it was the atmosphere in which we lived that evoked patriotic feelings in us, but then, in those days we had good upbringing, good grooming and good command over the language. That is why our work was also good".*

Beauty and liveliness of his songs is timeless. Passage of time has not faded their brilliance. Pradeep's lifestyle was clean, he lived upto the values he'd inherited. Depsite his patriotism, Pradeep was an avid listener to the BBC news and kept abreast of all that was happening in the country and elsewhere.

Kavi Pradeep died at the age of 84 at his bungalow, 'Panchamrita' at Vile Parle in North West Mumbai. His death left a deep gap in film industry. Such poets are a rare phenomenon.

Dadasaheb Phalke Award for Kavi Pradeep – incites multiple reactions.



Hrishikesh Mukerjee opined – “As a poet and patriot, he has no parallel. He should have got the award a long time ago. Unfortunately, the emphasis has always been on the stars”.

Actor Shammi Kapoor said it was wonderful that this honour had been bestowed on a fine poet-writer like Kavi Pradeep.



## **B.R. CHOPRA**

### **Multifaceted Film Maker**

**B**ALDEV Raj Chopra was born on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1914 in a family of Punjabi Khattris. He did his initial studies at an Urdu medium school in Jalandhar and later moved to Lahore to complete his studies. He did M.A in English literature from Government College which had churned out several cinema greats like Chetan Anand, Balraj Sahni and others. Deeply embedded in his psyche was fascination for films. He took to film journalism. Reviewing films for the Lahore based monthly magazine *Cine Herald* was the first step of his career. Before taking to journalism, he had actually wanted to become an ICS officer but he failed and destiny opened the floodgates of fame for him. He ran the magazine *Cine Herald* successfully from 1938 to 1946.

B.R. Chopra returned to India in the wake of partition. First he tried his luck at Delhi and later shifted to Mumbai. He had tried his luck in the making of **Chandni Chowk** at Rawalpindi with the help of his father's friends. Chisti, the mentor of Khayyam was the music director. Outbreak of the communal riots at Lahore on the day of recording of the first song forced BR Chopra to join the group of refugees towards India. He produced his first film **Karwat** which was a big flop. After this he directed the film **Afsana** in 1951. It is a tale of mistaken identity with Ashok Kumar in a double role and was a commercial success.

He went ahead and formed his own production company in 1955. The first film of his Company was **Ek Hi Raasta** (1956). It was a runaway success. Success, after success followed with films like **Naya Daur** (1957), **Sadhana** (1958), **Dhool Ka Phool** (1959), **Kanoon** (1960), **Gumrah** (1963), **Waqt** (1965) – directed by Yash Chopra and **Hamraaz** (1967). Storylines of the films made them a success alongwith the organizational structure of BR films. Studio worked with tight deadlines and strictly followed schedules.

Chopra always endeavoured to make films of social relevance and catered to the popular sentiments. In **Naya Daur** – a traditional rural community witnesses intrusion of modernism and mechanism, an incarnation of evil in the eyes of the rural folk. In the climax a horse carriage defeats an automobile in a race – symbolising victory of rural ethos vis-à-vis invasive modernity. **Naya Daur** is the best known example from Hindi cinema which explored the theme of industrialization. **Sadhana** dealt with prostitution. He made **Kanoon**, showing a woman resuming her affair



with her lover after she is married. **Gumrah** was another film in which the woman finally chooses to live with her husband. **Hamraaz** (1967) was another success story. He made **Ittefaq** (1969) – in this film the heroine is an adultress and murders her husband with the help of her lover and in the end kills herself as repentance. In **Dhund** (1973) a woman married to a paralytic takes on a lover.

Appreciating his directorial skills, Pt. Nehru wrote a letter to B.R. Chopra:

*“Last evening I saw your picture Naya Daur. Prince Philip of England who is in India wanted to see a good picture on village in India. Somebody suggested the name of your picture. I was very tired and did not like to sit for three hours but I thought I could be with Prince Philip for a few minutes and could come back after the picture got going. But the picture was so compelling that I sat through the whole film and enjoyed it thoroughly. The photography was excellent and the direction superb. The atmosphere of the village was really very nice”.*

An association with his younger brother yielded several – films like **Dhool Ka Phool** (1959), **Waqt** (made in 1965 and BR films’ first colour production), **Aadmi Aur Insaan** (1969) and **Ittefaq** (1969). After an almost two decade long partnership, Yash Chopra branched out and went on to make films independently. BR Chopra gave his socially relevant super-hits such as **Pati, Patni Aur Woh**, **Insaaf Ka Tarazu**, and **Nikah** under his banner. The BR Group of companies has since grown as the premier Indian Entertainment Conglomerate, with the advent of satellite television. The group’s foray into television software production began in 1985. Their work includes well-known and long running television serials like **Bahadur Shah Zafar**, **Mahabharat**, **Kanoon** and **Ek Se Badkar Ek**.

## Awards & honours:

B.R. Chopra has for long been the Hindi film industry’s senior spokesman and was awarded the Dadasaheb Phalke Award for his contribution to Indian cinema in 1999.

Andhra University conferred on him Doctorate of Letters. He has the distinction of being on the Union Public Service Commission for a number of years. He was member of the Board of Film Censors for a few years. He was the first recipient of the National Award as Best Director for his film **Humraaz** (1968). His film **Dharamputra** (1962) received the National Award as the Best Hindi film. **Gumrah** has also received the same award in 1963.

In the year 1961 he received Filmfare Best film award for the film **Kanoon**. He has served on various Government and trade bodies apart from being President of the Film Producers’ Council. The National Citizen Award was presented to him by the then Prime Minister Chandrashekhar, for the TV Serial **Mahabharat**. The Udyog Rattan award was presented to him by President Zail Singh in recognition of his



outstanding work in the field of industry. Giants International honoured him with an award in recognition of his vital and significant contribution in promoting excellence in Indian Cinema, particularly towards forstering common goodwill in society.

B.R. Chopra was one of the founder directors of the Maharashtra Film and Stage Corporation administering Film City. He has served on various juries, both National and International in India. Shankaracharya of Kanchi Kamkoti extolled the cultural contribution for the TV Series **Mahabharat**, and conferred upon B.R. Chopra the title of Chakravarty. **Mahabharat** created a world record by registering 96% viewership. **Mahabharat** was the first Indian serial to enter in Guinnees Book of Records for creating a world record by having been seen by the highest number of viewers. He received awards from Sahyog Foundation and Upron as producer and director of the Best Serial **Mahabharat**. Asian TV Network Inc. of Canada presented him with an award in appreciation of his outstanding contribution to the Film and TV industry. He received the Manas Ratan Trophy from the Akhil Bhartiya Manas Samiti and Award from the International Punjabi Society. *Screen Weekly* presented him with a special award for lifetime achievement in 1996.

He was honoured by being named Chief Guest at the 27<sup>th</sup> International Film Festival of India held at New Delhi in 1996. He was honoured with legendary Pearl Award at the first East Asia Film & TV Conference held at Penang, Malaysia. He received the Maharashtra Ratna Award for 1998 from Maharashtra Kalaniketan. He was given Lifetime Achievement award by the Sansui Viewers' Choice at a function held at New Delhi in October in 1998.

B.R. Chopra received a special award from IMPPA (Indian Motion Picture Producers Association) for his outstanding contribution to the Indian Film Industry. He received the Bhartiya Sanskriti Puruskar for the TV Serial Mahabharat. B.R. Chopra was honoured with the Cintaa Trophy by the Cine & TV Artiste's Association at the annual General Body Meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> October 1999. He was also honoured by MAMI for Lifetime Achievement.



# HRISHIKESH MUKHERJEE

## Treasure House of Indian Cinema

**H**RISHIKESH Mukherjee's destiny landed him in a realm he never dreamt of. Your future unfolds spontaneously before you leaving no room for manipulation. He was a science student and his future visualization for himself was a person teaching a science subject, but the pedestal which awaited him was in the film world. After graduating in chemistry he taught mathematics and science for a while. Then his fascination for photography prompted his signing an assignment with Kolkata's New Theatres. His initial job was that of a lab assistant and during this period he learnt the nuances of the trade. One of his friends at studio was an editor and whenever Hrishikesh had time he would sit in his friend's company and attentively observed the editing process and soon he became adept enough to suggest what needs to be retained and what should be clipped. His suggestions to his editor friend caught attention of Bimal Roy who entrusted him with the editing of his film **Tapish**. Though not confident enough about his skill of editing, he bulldozed into this challenge and got tremendous accolades for its successful editing. After this success he decided to quit the studio and pursue higher studies but he was held back by Bimal Roy. Bimal Roy had got an offer from the Bombay Talkies to direct a Hindi film for them and was leaving for Mumbai. He asked Hrishikesh to accompany him and Hrishikesh came to Mumbai in 1951 and never went back. He became an independent director himself. Bimal Roy set up his own concern Bimal Roy Productions whose maiden venture **Do Bigha Zamin** created tremendous waves in India and abroad. The film was based on a short story written by Salil Choudhary with screenplay by Hrishikesh Mukherjee who was Editor and Chief Assistant Director.

Thus while Hrishida grew in stature with Bimal Roy as his mentor he nursed dreams of making his film. During the making of **Do Bigha Zamin** Hrishida used to observe a building nearby which began capturing his imagination by and by. The seeds of **Musafir** were sown and they fell on highly fertile soil. When **Madhumati** was being shot Hrishida who was Bimal Roy's editor and always present on the sets, would often find himself staring at a house which overlooked the studios. Looking at it Hrishida wondered about the people who had lived in the house. The house gave him and Dilip Kumar, the hero of this reincarnation drama, an idea for a film. A film about three different families who had at some point in their lives lived within the



four walls of a house very much like the one they saw everyday. The film would be split into three sections, three different stories about birth, marriage and death, whose only common link was the house. It was a novel idea never tried on the Hindi screen before. Hrishida was convinced the film would flop but Dilip Kumar was convinced it would work and coaxed and cajoled Hrishida to direct it himself. The film is the story of a house and three families that stay in it as tenants in quick succession. Suchitra Sen and Shekhar form the first part of this trilogy, Kishore Kumar and Nirupa Roy star in the second while Dilip Kumar, Usha Kiran and Daisy Irani give the third and concluding part a touch of poignance, a brush with poetry. Very predictably and expectedly **Musafir** was a damp squib- but that was only to be expected since the film was way ahead of its times. Indeed, today if **Musafir** is revived it will be hailed as a classic and earn endless praise for its 'unusual theme'. It won Hrishida a Gold Medal and a certificate of merit from the National Awards jury. Looking back today, in the largely themeless context of Hindi cinema, **Musafir** is distinguished by its theme alone. However for Hrishikesh Mukherjee commercial and critical success came with **Anari** (1959) starring Raj Kapoor and Nutan. L. B. Lachman (the man who is better known today as a pioneering builder with 'Evershine' being his brand name) was the man who could size up the immense talent brewing in this brooding, young man. He offered Hrishida **Anari** for directing the film. **Anari** was a runaway commercial success. The film virtually walked away with each and every award in 1959. Studded with hit Shankar -Jaikishen songs, **Anari** was about an idealistic young man (Raj Kapoor) disillusioned with the rich (mainly heroine Nutan's uncle, Motilal). A certain sensitivity and a benign aura pervaded Mukherjee's cinema from the beginning. **Anari** also featured Lalita Pawar as Mrs. D'Sa, the sandpaper-tongued, but soft-hearted landlady.

It was hardly surprising that the association between L.B. Lachman and Hrishida touched dizzy heights with **Anuradha** which won the National Award for the best film. Based on a short story written by Sachin Bhowmick, first published in the prestigious Bengali monthly Magazine *Desh*, **Anuradha** introduced Leela Naidu as a heroine. The film was also one of Pandit Ravi Shanker's rare forays in Hindi cinema. Each song, each solo by Lata penned by Shailendra was an unforgettable melody. **Anuradha** was a touching saga revolving around an idealistic doctor who practices in a village while his talented artistic wife whiles away her time tending to their lovable daughter and performing routine household chores. Matters come to a head when she, in desperation, decides to leave her husband and return to her rich father's house and pursue her career as a singer and dancer. The denouement is such as to move even the stone-hearted to tears. '**Anuradha**' is without doubt one of the classics of Hindi cinema.

Following **Anuradha** he directed **Chhaya** (1961), **Mem Didi** (1961), **Aashiq** (1961), **Asli Naqli** (1962), **Saanjh Aur Savera** (1964), **Do Dil** (1965), **Anupama**



(1966), **Biwi Aur Makan** (1966), **Gaban** (1966), **Aashirwad** (1967), **Pyar Ka Sapna** (1968), **Satyakam** (1969). Ironically just when it looked like Hrishida had it made, in the period from **Anuradha** to **Satyakam** (1969) barring **Asli Naqli** (1962), **Anupama** (1966), **Aashirwad** (1967) and of course **Satyakam** (1969) nothing was particularly too distinguishable in his work. The selection of theme for **Asli Naqli**, which was away from that of **Anuradha**, may have seemed a strangely discordant move yet it was precipitated by the commercial failure of the Balraj Sahni -Leela Naidu saga. Lachman and Hrishida retraced their steps to the oldest and surest formula for a box office success film **Asli Naqli** - the story revolving around a rich vagrant young man posing as a jobless, penniless person with all cards falling neatly into place in the climax. Dev Anand and Sadhana excelled and so did Shankar Jaikishan and the Shailendra - Hasrat team.

The 70's saw Hrishida do some of his best work with **Anand** (1970), **Buddha Mil Gaya** (1971), **Guddi** (1971), **Bawarchi** (1972), **Sabse Bada Sukh** (1972), **Abhiman** (1973), **Namak Haram** (1973), **Phir Kab Milogi** (1974), **Chaitali** (1975), **Chupke Chupke** (1975), **Mili** (1975), **Arjun Pandit** (1976), **Alaap** (1977), **Kotwal Saab** (1977), **Jurmana** (1979), **Golmaal** (1979). Most significantly, Hrishida and Raj Kapoor struck an instant rapport with the film **Anari**. In fact, when **Anand** was released in 1970 many viewers wondered why Hrishida had dedicated this film to Raj Kapoor? The answer is elementary! Hrishida was already working on the script of **Anand** then and he had decided that Raj Kapoor would be the ideal choice for the role of a man who battles cancer cheerfully. Raj Kapoor was another very dear friend of Hrishida. He had worked with him in his second film, **Anari**, and had been penciled in to play the lead in **Anand** too. Till Hrishida realized that-he couldn't bear to see his friend die even in reel life. So it was Rajesh Khanna who got to play the cancer patient. Interestingly, this was his only film that Rajesh Khanna stopped his mother from seeing. When she had earlier seen a trial of **Safar**, another film in which he died, his mother had been so affected by his "death" that she had fallen seriously ill and had to be hospitalized. So she was never allowed to see **Anand**. **Anand** is one of Rajesh Khanna's best-loved roles but it was also memorable for Amitabh Bachchan who was struggling to establish himself. If the buzz is to be believed, Hrishida had toyed with the idea of casting, Mehmood in the role of **Anand**'s buddy and Mehmood had even-advised Amitabh who was his room mate, on how to react after Anand's death. Of course, 'eventually, Amitabh and Mehmood's plan of action backfired because Hrishida wanted genuine emotions, not theatrical histrionics. Amitabh gave him what he was looking for with his second shot and proved not just to his director but the to audience at large that he was the perfect choice for the serious, introverted doctor who becomes the fun-loving Anand's unlikely friend. Their friendship in many ways reflected the bonds between Raj Kapoor and Hrishida who were poles apart. In fact, Raj Kapoor used to address Hrishida as Babumoshai.



# MAJROOH SULTANPURI



*Above (left & right) Mazrooh Sultanpuri in various moods*

1993



# DILIP KUMAR



Top (left) with Nargis in Andaz, 1949, Hindi; Above (left) with Ajit in Naya Daur, 1957, Hindi; Above (right) Publicity poster of Ganga Jamuna, one of Dilip Kumar's all time hits

1994





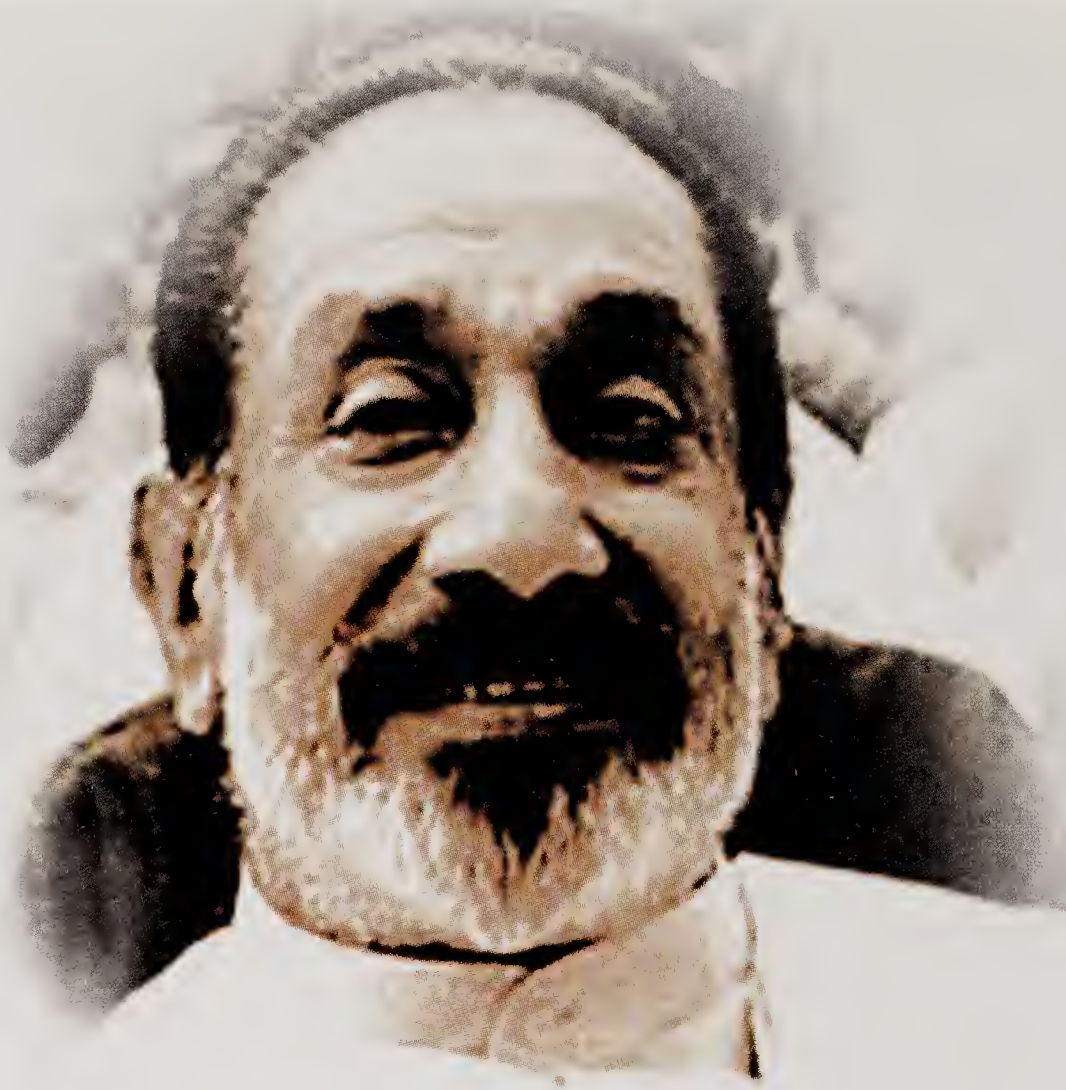
# RAJ KUMAR



*Top (right) in Akasmika, 1993, Kannada; Above (left) With Pandaribai in Bedara Kanappa, 1954, Kannada; Above (right) with Jayanthi in Chakra Teertha, 1967, Kannada*

# 1995





# SIVAJI GANESAN



*Top(right) in Veerapandiya Kattaboman 1959, Tamil; Above (left) with Padmini in Vietnam Veedu, 1970, Tamil ; Above (centre) in Kalvanin Kadhali, 1955, Tamil; Above (right) in Parasakthi, 1952, Tamil*

1996



A large, sepia-toned portrait of an elderly man with a white forehead, looking directly at the camera with a slight smile.

# PRADEEP



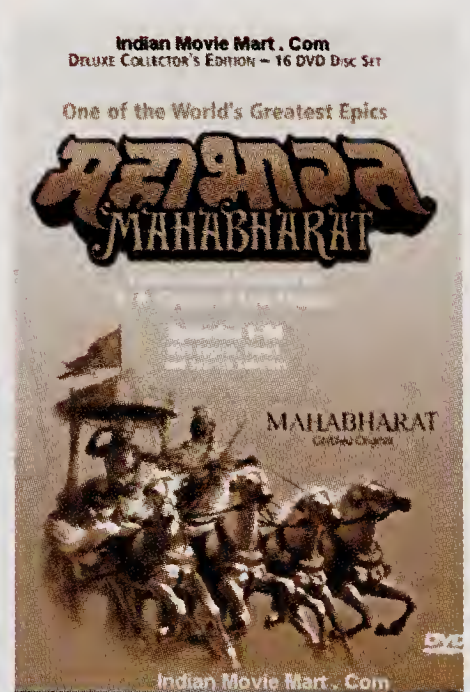
*Top (right) Pradeep receiving award from Pandit Nehru; Above (left) recording a song; Above (right) with family*

# 1997





# B.R. CHOPRA



Films directed by B.R. Chopra :

*Above (left) Kanoon, 1960, Hindi; Above (centre) Sadhana, 1958, Hindi;  
Above (right) Publicity poster of tele serial Mahabharat produced under  
the banner of B.R. Films*

1998



# HRISHIKESH MUKHERJEE



Films directed by Hrishikesh Mukherjee:  
*Above (left) Ashirwad, 1968, Hindi; Above (centre) Satyakam, 1969, Hindi; and Above (right) Hrishikesh Mukherjee with Rekha on the set of Khubsoorat 1980, Hindi*

1999





# ASHA BHOSLE



*Top (left) in harmony with Ali Akbar Khan ; Top (right) An album cover of her hit songs; (Above) with late R.D. Burman*

2000



Hrishikesh Mukherjee relates here how Rajesh Khanna approached him to cast him in *Anand*.

*When I was planning Anand, Rajesh Khanna came to me and said he had heard that I had a good story. I told him he could do the role but with certain conditions viz. to give me three months from his very busy schedule, that he would come to the studio on time and that he would be paid only a sixth of his current price. He said he could spend only 20 days. I said if it exceeded that time, I would pay him on a pro rata basis. He came on time for the first day the second day and next day. When he arrived the following day, still bubbling with enthusiasm, I was pleasantly surprised and I jokingly told every 'Bhago, ye date de ke aya hai! – Run, he's giving date for the next schedule! In the end we did complete the film in exactly twenty days.*

— Hrishikesh Mukherjee

To Hrishida goes the credit of making Ashok Kumar sing again in *Aashirwad* (1967). Ashok Kumar, as almost everyone knows, was a reluctant actor. And to make matters worse in the early days of the talkies, stars had to sing as well. But in *Aashirwad* Dadamoni appeared to actually enjoy singing his songs especially '*Railgaadi.....* and '*Nao chali.....* and all the more bagged the national award! An auspicious start to Hrishida's new association with producer N.C.Sippy.

**Guddi** gave Jaya Bhaduri a flying start after which there was no need to look back. However, Vani Jayram who rendered '*Bole re Papihara*' under the baton of Vasant Desai was not quite as fortunate.

Amitabh was also signed for **Guddi**. He was to play Jaya Bhaduri's silent admirer whom she initially overlooks because of her starry-eyed fascination with Dharmendra but whom she grows to love in the course of 18 reels. However, when Hrishida heard that Amitabh had signed a South film, **Pyar Ki Kahani**, he dropped him and the role was eventually enacted by a Bengali actor, Samit Bhanjo even though some scenes with Amiatbh were already in the cans. During **Guddi** both Amitabh and Jaya were newcomers. The only stars of the film were Dharmendra and Utpal Dutt. Of course, on Hrishida's sets there were no stars. Everyone was treated as equals. **Guddi** shattered many myths about movies and matinee idols but it also turned Jaya into an overnight star. She's still referred to as **Guddi**.

**Bawarchi** is another of Hrishida's memorable films. It was a remake of a Bengali film in which Rabi Ghosh had played the role of the handy help who is instrumental in bringing happiness and harmony into a household. The film has inspired many film-makers. The character Rajesh Khanna played, Hrishida once admitted, was very much like his own father. His father like him-was a student of chemistry who had graduated first class first. Hrishida remembers him as a man who



often experimented in the kitchen and made cosmetics for the women of the family. **Bawarchi** with good performances, good music, good theme somehow could not emulate the success of the Bengali original.

**Abhimaan** gave Bindu a new image. Bindu who-had become an established vamp after films like **Kati Patang**, **Zanjeer** and **Imtihaan** was dying to break out of the bad girl stereotype. It was Hrishida who dared to give her a sympathetic role in **Abhimaan**. Bindu grabbed the chance and gave the role her best shot. She recalls how when the film was first released as soon as she came on screen people were sure that she would drive a wedge between Amitabh and Jaya and were presently surprised to find her coaxing him to return to his home and wife. After this film producers suddenly sat up and started seeing Bindu in a new light. She went on to play other “different” roles in Hrishida’s film like the cripple of **Chaitali** and Sanjeev Kumar’s mother in **Arjun Pandit** later.

**Namak Haram**, the only film after ‘**Anand**’ to pit Rajesh Khanna and Amitabh Bachchan opposite each other; also the first major break for Raza Murad; ‘**Mili**, a parallax view of ‘**Anand**’ with the heroine suffering from cancer; **Chupke Chupke**, a hilarious comedy studded with stars like Dharmendra, Sharmila Tagore, Amitabh Bachchan, Jaya Bhaduri; **Golmaal**, Utpal Dutt hogging the limelight from Amol Palekar and Bindiya Goswami were Hrishikesh’s some of the memorable movies. **Khoobsurat** was more or less his swan song with an outstanding performance by Rekha. Films like **Alaap**, **Naram Garam**, **Namumkin**, **Jurmana**, **Bemisal**, **Rang Birangi**, **Kisi Se Na Kehna**, **Jhooti** and **Jhoot Bole Kauva Kaate** fell way short of the high standards this maestro had set for himself. **Jhoot Bole Kauva Kaate** was a film Hrishida had planned years ago. It was to complete the trilogy of laugh riots that had begun with **Gol Mal** and **Naram Gram**. Utpal Dutt had excelled as the eccentric inspector and the wanting-to-wed-widower in these films and he was to star in **Jhoot Bole Kauva Kaate** too in the role of the girl’s father. But by the time the film went on the floors Utpal Dutt had passed away and Amol Palekar was too old to play an eligible bachelor who woos Juhi and tries to win over her father. So Hrishida turned to Amrish Puri to liven up the role written for his friend Utpal. He signed the son of another old friend, Surender Kapoor who had worked with him in **Anari**, Anil Kapoor, for the role Amol would have played if the film had been made a decade earlier. For the role of the crow Hrishida got a stuffed crow specially made and alternated shots of it with live crows. He tried a comeback with **Jhoot Bhole Kawa Kaate** trying to capture-the magic of his films of the 1970s but the film was both a critical and commercial failure.

He was the editor of the films **Tathapi** (1947), **Heera** (1959), **Char Diwari** (1961), **Dastak** (1970). As a screenplay writer and chief assistant director to Bimal Roy he was involved with the films **Maa** (1950) **Do Bigha Zamin** (1951), **Parineeta**



(1951), **Biraj Bahu** (1954), **Devdas** (1956), **Madhumati** (1958). Keeping in tune with the popularity of television he directed TV serials **Hum Hindustani**, **Dhoop Chhaon**, **Talaash**, **Rishte**, **Ujale Ki Oar**.

There were disappointments earlier in his career as well - **Aashiq**, **Saanjh Aur Savera**, **Chhaya**, **Biwi Aur Makan**, **Pyar Ka Sapna**, **Do Dil**, **Phir Kab Milogi**, **Gaban** (in all fairness here he merely completed the film after the death of Krishan Chopra), **Sabse Bada Sukh**. But it can only be said that his career followed a smooth, even course!

There is another endearing facet about Hrishida - he was a great believer in team spirit. His unit members were constant and the atmosphere on the sets akin to that seen in a joint family. As long as he was alive Rajinder Singh Bedi was his writer, Jaywant Pathare was his cameraman, his younger brother Dwarkanath Mukherjee was virtually a pillar he could lean on. Gulzar, Dr. Rahi Masoom Raza, Sachin Bhowmick, Bimal Dutt, Ashok Rawat, were all part of his team. Though he is not a glamorous director, Hrishikesh Mukherjee is one of the most popular and beloved filmmakers in Indian Cinema. His magic lies not in the glamour or largeness so often associated with cinema, but in its simplicity and warmth. The films he directed show that he understood middle-class mind-set as very few others do. He poked gentle fun at its outworn values, its failings and foibles and prodded his audience to think. Hrishikesh Mukherjee's cinema could make you cry. You sniffle when Sharmila Tagore's emotionally withdrawn father surmounts his long-festering resentment towards his daughter and comes to the railway station to secretly rejoice in her eloping with her lover in **Anupama** or when Ashok Kumar opens his heart, overcomes his distaste and makes his daughter-in-law's son, the product of rape, light his son's pyre in **Satyakam**. Mukherjee's movies could make you laugh. You chuckle in the Wodehousian comedy of inconsequentialities, **Chupke Chupke** when Amitabh, posing as a professor of botany, grapples with the word 'corolla' or in **Golmaal** when a truant moustache leads to many merry muddles. Sometimes, his films could make you laugh even while you were blinking hard to part the film of tears covering your eyes. Like in **Anand**, where Rajesh Khanna greets even death with a well-turned bonhomie. Without being aggressively experimental or ostentatiously avant garde in form, theme or treatment, many of Mukherjee's 40-plus films have charmed audiences and critics alike because of their middle-of-the-road accessibility, heart-warming irony and literate sensibilities. Most of his captivating characters inhabit a middle-class, urban, educated milieu and lightly wear an air of high morality and intrinsic geniality.

## Awards & Honours:

Hrishida served a stint as Chairman of the Central Board of Film Certification and of the National Film Development Corporation. In 2000, he was awarded the



Dadasaheb Phalke Award and on January 26, 2001, he was awarded the Padma Vibhushan for his contribution to Indian Cinema. He was awarded Filmfare Award Best Film for **Khubsoorat** and **Anand**, Filmfare Award for Best Story for **Anand** and Filmfare Awards for Best Editor for **Anand**, **Madhumati** and **Naukri**. Memorable films were **Musafir** (1957), **Anari** (1959), **Anuradha** (1960), **Asli Naqli** (1962), **Anupama** (1966), **Ashirwad** (1968), **Satyakam** (1969), **Anand** (1970), **Budha Mil Gaya** (1971), **Guddi** (1971), **Bawarchi** (1972), **Abhimaan** (1973), **Namak Haram** (1973), **Chupke Chupke** (1975), **Mili** (1975), **Alaap** (1977), **Golmaal** (1979), **Khubsoorat** (1980), **Rang Birangi** (1983). Ill-health has increasingly curtailed his activities. But this 80 year old genius, who has been awarded the Padma Vibhushan and the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, can afford to rest easy on his many laurels.



# ASHA BHOSLE

## God Gifted Voice

**A**SHA, second only to her elder sister Lata Mangeshkar in her calibre in singing, was born on September 8, 1933. Much of her early career was spent in the shadow of Lata. However, Asha could carve out a cozy and comfortable niche for herself in Bollywood. Flawless rendering of songs, bhajans, ghazals, traditional Indian classical music, pop and film music certify her versatility.

Asha has sung over 20,000 songs in 14 languages for three generations of Indians from O.P. Nayyar's breezy songs of 1950s to A.R. Rehman's modern 1990s items.

Asha was extremely shy as a child. She eloped with her 31-yr old lover when she was a teenager and after his death in an early age she followed her sister Lata's footsteps who had taken to singing. O.P. Nayyar recognized her potential and patronized her. He gave her a big break in **CID (1956)**. Asha became his favourite after he fell out with Lata Mangeshkar. Association of O.P. Nayyar blossomed and brought forth many effervescent songs. They recorded songs for many hit films like **Naya Daur**, **Tumsa nahin Dekha**, **Howrah Bridge**, **Kashmir ki Kali**. Some of their famous songs including *Aiye meherbaan* from **Howrah Bridge** picturized on sensuous Madhubala. Some of his memorable songs include:

*Yeh hai reshmi zulfon ka andhera* – **Mere Sanam**, *Aao huzur* – **Kismet**, *Main pyaar ka rahi hoon* – **Ek Musafir Ek Haseena**.

### Trivia on Asha Bhosle

- Asha recorded her last song for OP Nayyar in the movie **Pran Jaye Par Vachan Na Jaye** (1974).
- The solo number *Chain se* got many awards, but it wasn't included in movie.
- B.R. Chopra, the producer of **Naya Daur** (1957), was another person who recognized Asha as a great singer in 1950s. **Waqt** and **Gumrah** were the films in which she was made to sing.
- Khayyam was yet another music director to have discovered her potential. Though his partnership with Asha dates back to his first movie **Biwi** (1948), it



was **Umrao Jaan** picturized on Rekha that Asha's talent as a ghazal singer was established and it became a milestone in her career. *Dil cheez kya hai, In aankhon ki masti ke, Ye kya jagah hai doston* and *Justju jiski thi* rendering won her the first national award.

- Composer Ravi got her to sing for his first movie **Vachan** (1955) and the melodious lullaby *Chandamana door ke* became an overnight hit. She sang bhajans for **Grihasti** and **Kajal**. He and Asha recorded a wide spectrum of songs including the funny duet with Kishore Kumar *CAT cat mane billi* for **Dilli ka thug**. He also recorded songs for other movies like **Waqt**. Kishore Kumar worked as a music composer in a few films like **Door Gagan ki chhaon mein** and Asha was his first choice.
- S.D. Burman after falling out with Lata in 1957, opted for Asha as his lead female voice. Her duets with Rafi are *Achha ji, main haari chalo* from **Kala Paani**. *Gunguna rahe hain bhanware* from **Aradhana** (1969) are memorable. Her duets with Kishore Kumar are: *Haal kaisa hai janab ka* from **Chalti Ka Naam Gadi**

- *Chood do aanchal* from **Nau Do Gyarah**
- Asha sang many solo hits under S.D. Burman's baton: *Rat akeli hai* from **Jewel Thief** (1967), *Kali ghata chaaye* from **Sujata**, *Koi aaya dhadkan kehti ha* from **Laajwanti** are some of them.

Asha also sang for S.D. Burman's assistant Jaidev in **Hum dono, Mujhe Jeene do** and other movies. She also worked with music composer Shankar Jaikishan, Madan Mohan and Salil Chaudhary. She sang the seductive *Parde mein rehne do* from **Shikar** (1958) – for Shankar Jaikishan's composition winning her first Filmfare Award.

- Asha recorded one of the Bollywood's first rock and roll number *Eena Meena Deeka* with Ramchandra.
- Madan Mohan recorded quite a few songs with Asha, including the famous *Jhumka gira re* from **Mera Saaya**. In **Chhoti Se Baat** (1975), Asha Bhosle recorded the popular *Jaaneman Jaaneman* number with K.J. Yesudas for Salil Chaudhary.
- With R.D. Burman (Pancham), whom she later married, Asha rendered hit songs for Pancham's successful movie **Teesri Manzil**. These songs included popular duets with Rafi – *Aja, Aja, O Haseena* and *O mere sona re*. In the 1970s, *Piya tu..* from **Carvan** (1971), *Dum maro dum* from **Hare Krishna Hare Rama** (1972), *Chura liya hai* from **Yaadon Ki Baarat**. Kishore once commented that *Dum maro dum* is powerful enough to bring a dead person to life.



Asha and Kishore recorded many hit duets for Pancham's compositions: *Jaane ja dhoondta phir raha* from **Jawani Diwani**, *Bhali bhali se ek soorat* from **Buddha Mil Gaya**

In 1980s Pancham and Asha recorded beautiful ghazals for films like **Izazat** (1987) – *Mera kuch saaman, Khaali haath sham aayi hai, Katra katra* and many more songs like *O Maria* (**Sagar**).

Anu Mullick's first hit film **Sohni-Mahiwal**, had songs sung by Asha. The South Indian maestro Ilayaraja worked with Asha in Kamal Hassan's **Hey Ram**, the film flopped, but Asha's song *Janmon ki* went well with the audience. Sandeep Chowta got Asha to sing *Kambakth ishq* from **Pyar tune kya kiya** (2001), which got youngsters grooving.

A.R. Rehman got Asha to sing *Tanha tanha* for **Rangeela**, *Rang de* (**Thakshak**), *Radha kaise na jale* (**Lagaan**) with Udit Narain and *Kahin aag lage* (**Taal**), *O Bhanwar* (**Daud**) with K.J. Yesudas.

In 1980s, Asha went on a global trip, staging concerts in the USA, Canada and the UK. In the mid 1980s she sang with Boy George and Stephan Lauscombs. In 1997, she sang a love song with Code Red, a boy band. She also recorded the song *the way you dream* (one great leap) with Michael Stip that was used in the English movie, the **Bullet proof monk**.

In 1997, Asha did a private album with Leslie Lewis – *Janam Samjha Karo* that won her 1997 MTV award. Asha Bhosle also worked with the Indo-Pakistani singer Adnam Sami for **Kabhi to nazar milao** which went on to become the best selling album.

## Awards & Honours:

Asha has received many awards including six Filmfare Awards and also the Filmfare Lifetime Achievement Award. She won only six Filmfare Awards because after getting her sixth award, she had asked not to be considered for the Filmfare Awards. Asha received Dadasaheb Phalke Award in 2001.



# YASH CHOPRA

## Romantic Film Maker

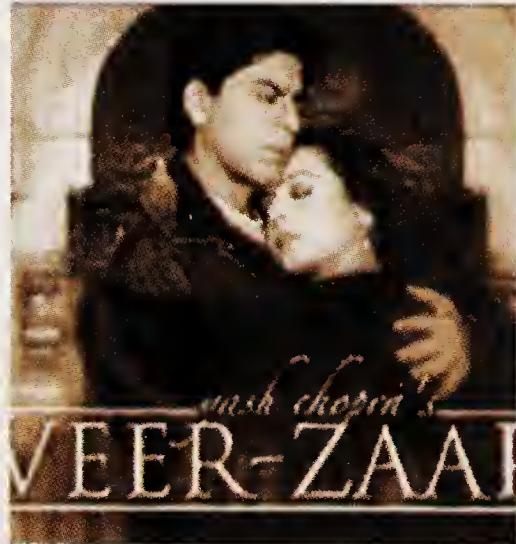
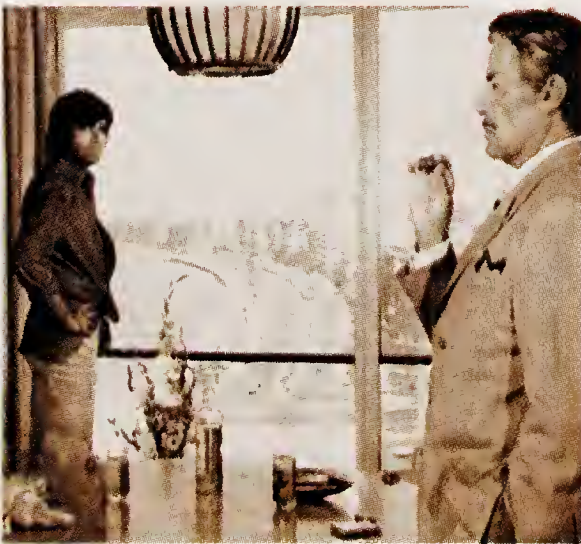
**R**OMANCE finds spontaneous, streamlined and broad spectrum expression in the films of Yash Chopra as an extension of his love impregnated psyche. He has diversified a bit along other film types with equal success. Social themes have also provided pivot for film making.

Yash Chopra was born in Lahore, to an accountant in the PWD of the British administration in Punjab. The youngest of eight children, the oldest of whom 'was almost 30 years his senior, he was largely brought up in the Lahore house of his second brother -BR Chopra, then a film journalist, but subsequently one of India's great movie moghuls, known for his films on social topics, and later maker of the record-breaking TV serial, **Mahabharata**. Yash Chopra went to Jullundhar to continue his education while his brother BR Chopra stayed on in Lahore. Later BR Chopra migrated to Bombay just weeks before partition in August 1947. A large part of the Lahore-based Punjabi film industry also migrated and BR used his contacts among these people to set himself up as a leading director in Mumbai and soon became an independent producer. He made some of the great classics of Indian cinema, including **Ek Hi Raasta**, **Naya Daur** and **Sadhana** among others. He is known to present younger generation as the maker of the TV serialisation of the **Mahabharata**, whose place in the history of television is assured. Yash Chopra began as an assistant director to I. S. Johar before moving on to assisting big brother B.R. Chopra while another brother Dharam Chopra, worked as his cameraman. He was the associate director to the film **Kanoon** (1960). He directed **Dhool ka phool** (1959) **Dharmputra** (1961) **Waqt** (1969), **Ittefaq** (1969), **Aadmi aur insaan** (1969), **Daag** (1973), **Joshila** (1973), **Deewaar** (1975), **Kabhi kabhie** (1976), **Trishul** (1978), **Kala patthar** (1979), **Silsila** (1981), **Mashaal** (1984), **Faasle** (1985), **Vijay** (1988), **Chandni** (1989), **Lamhe** (1991), **Parampara** (1992), **Darr** (1993), **Dil to pagal hai** (1997), **Veer-Zaara** (2004). He has written the screen play for the films **Dil To Pagal Hai**, **Silsila**, **Kabhi kabhie**, **Daag**. As a producer his films were **Daag** (1973), **Kabhi kabhie** (1976), **Doosra aadmi** (1977) **Noorie** (1979), **Kala patthar** (1979), **Nakhuda** (1981) **Silsila** (1981), **Sawaal** (1982), **Mashaal** (1984), **Faasle** (1985), **Vijay** (1988), **Chandni** (1989), **Lamhe** (1991), **Darr** (1993), **Aaina** (1993), **Dilwale**





# YASH CHOPRA

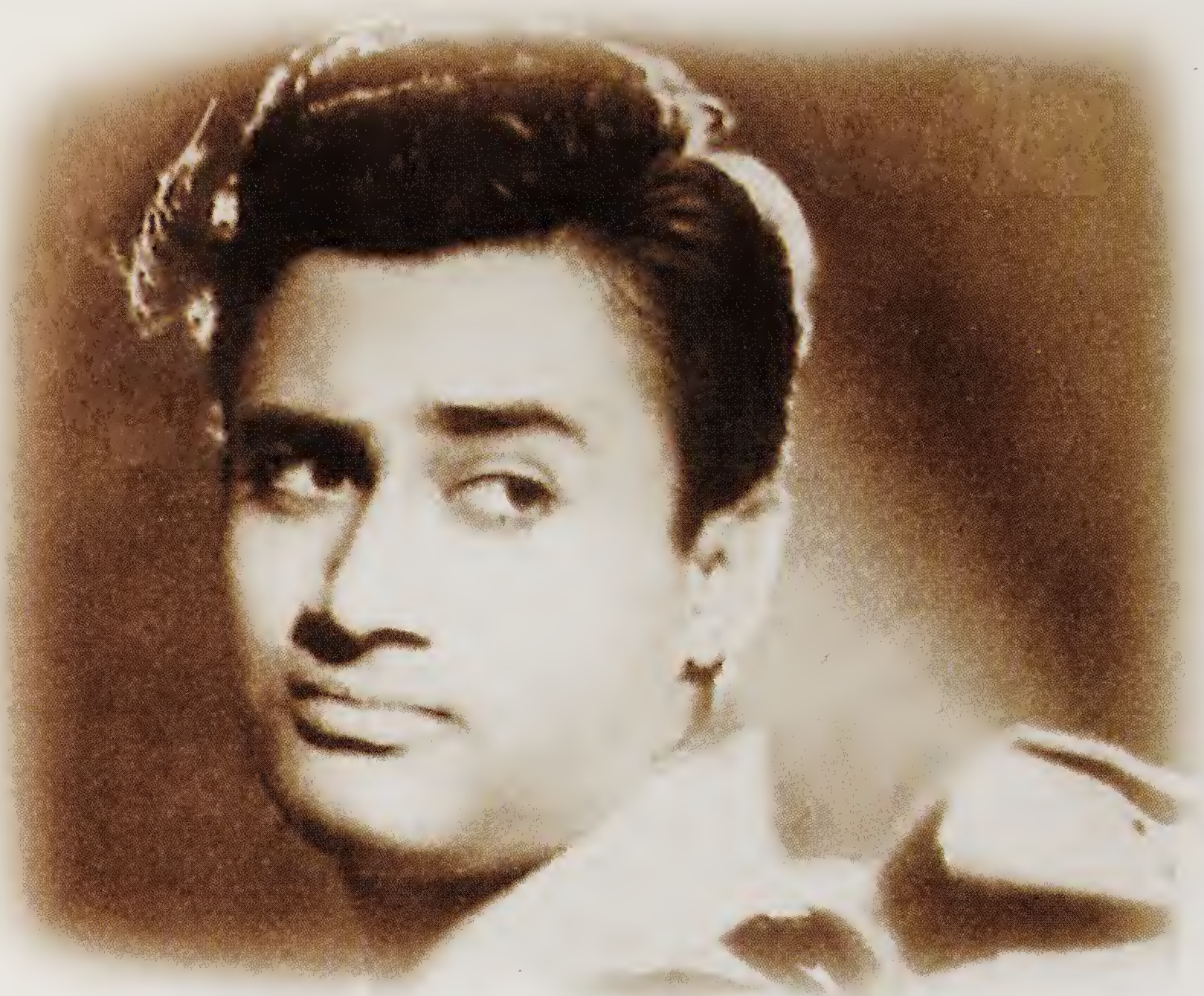


Films directed by Yash Chopra:

*Above (left) Ek Hi Raasta 1956, Hindi; Above (centre) Deewar, 1975  
Hindi, Above (right) Veer Zaara, 2005, Hindi*

## 2001





# DEV ANAND



Dev Anand: Living Legend of Indian Cinema

*Top (right) in Taxi Driver, 1954, Hindi; Above (left) in Guide, 1965, Hindi; Above (centre): Johny Mera Naam, 1970, Hindi; Above (right) With Zeenat Aman in Hare Rama Hare Krishna, 1971*

2002



# MRINAL SEN



Films directed by Mrinal Sen :

*Clockwise from Top (right) Akashkusum 1965, Bengali; Ek Din Achanak, 1989, Hindi; Ek Din Pratidin 1979, Bengali; Khandhar, 1983, Hindi; Bhuvan Shome, 1969, Hindi; Matir Manisha, 1966, Oriya; Oka Oorie Katha 1977, Telugu*

2003





ADOOR

GOPALAKRISHNAN

Films directed by Adoor Gopalakrishnan:

*Clockwise from Top (right) Mathilukal, 1989, Malayalam;*

*Swayamvaram, 1972, Malayalam; Elippathayam, Malayalam, 1981;*

*Mukhamukham, 1984, Malayalam*

2004



**dulhania le jayenge** (1995), **Dil to pagal hai** (1997), **Humko ishq ne mara** (1997) (TV), **Mohabbatein** (2000), **Mere yaar ki shaadi hai** (2002), **Mujhse dosti karoge** (2002), **Saathiya** (2002), **Hum tum** (2004), **Veer-Zaara** (2004).

The year 1959 was crucial in the history of Indian cinema. Three major films released that year: **Kaagaz Ke Phool**, Guru Dutt's semi-autobiographical work, critically acclaimed but a box-office failure; **Apur Sansar**, Satyajit Ray's last installment in the Apu trilogy; and **Sujata**, Bimal Roy's classic melodrama about a love affair between an upper caste Hindu and an untouchable woman. Two years earlier, Mehboob Khan's **Mother India** was nominated for the best foreign language film Oscar. In 1959, Yash Chopra decided to step out of his elder brother's shadow and establish himself as a filmmaker. His first film, a social melodrama, **Dhool ka Phool**, starring evergreen hero Rajendra Kumar with Mala Sinha, Nanda and Ashok Kumar, was a story about an illegitimate child trying to reclaim his history. The film was also a call for communal harmony, an issue of great importance to a young nation, which had witnessed its worst-ever religious strife only 12 years before. The young filmmaker Yash Chopra was 27 years old. **Dhool ka Phool** was a big success at the box-office. His second film was **Dharamputra** (1961), an overlooked black-and-white film with a strong message of harmonious ties between Hindus and Muslims. A young Shashi Kapoor (he later resurfaced in a few Yash Raj films in the 1970s) plays an illegitimate child of a Muslim woman (Mala Sinha), adopted by a Hindu family. Chopra's third film **Waqt** (1965) was the first multi star production of its kind in Bollywood, woven around the lost-and-found theme. Balraj Sahni played the patriarch of the family with three sons, Raaj Kumar, Sunil Dutt and Shashi Kapoor. The family, including Sahni's wife Achla Sachdev, separate following an earthquake, only to be reunited in the end after much trial and tribulation. The film's ending included an over-the-top dramatic court sequence, which was the hallmark of some of B. R. Chopra's classic films (from **Kanoon** to **Insaaf Ka Tarazu**). Also in the cast were Sharmila Tagore and Sadhana, love interests of Sahni's sons. Multi starrer **Waqt** (1965) based on the lost and found genre was his major commercial breakthrough and even went on to win for him his first Filmfare Award for Best Director. Thirty years later, in 1995, Chopra's son Aditya paid homage to his father's career by using the same song in **Dilwale dulhania le jayenge**. This time, as Amrish Puri sings the song to his wife Farida Jalal, Aditya added another nostalgic touch. The camera captures Puri's ailing mother (played by none other than Achla Sachdev), looking all too coy as if she were back in days of **Waqt**. He followed this up with a taut bold little thriller **Ittefaq** (1969). **Ittefaq** was an extremely bold film for its time. Not only was it songless, but the hero (Rajesh Khanna) and heroine (Nanda) were not even paired with one another. The film is mainly shot in one house with taut editing that keeps up the suspense in the film. He produced another film **Aadmi aur Insaan** in 1969.



Breaking away from B.R. Films, Yash Chopra launched his own production banner Yashraj Films with **Daag** (1973) followed by **Joshila** (1973). He then entered one of his best phases with Amitabh Bachchan - **Deewaar** (1975) **Kabhi Kabhi** (1976), a love story across two generations, **Trishul** (1978) and **Kala Patthar** (1979) among others.

**Deewaar** is probably one of the most memorable Hindi films of all time. The film is a perfect amalgamation of two older classics - **Ganga Jamuna** (1961) that looks at the good brother v/s the bad brother and **Mother India** (1957) in which the mother undergoes all sorts of hardships to bring up her sons on her own. The film contains all the stock-in-trade elements of the Indian melodrama. The good and bad brother, the long suffering mother as the central moral force, divine intervention and religious symbols but what sets it apart is the taut script (perhaps the best ever Salim-Javed Script), the powerful dialogues and above all a powerhouse performance by Amitabh Bachchan as the son driven to crime - perhaps his best ever! The film is one of a series in which he plays the 'angry young man' - the lone rebel, the man seeking personal vengeance and social justice, operating outside and more efficiently 'than the law'. A far cry from the sensitive poet of **Kabhi Kabhi**. **Trishul** had as its main ingredient a father - son conflict with an illegitimate son destroying his father for abandoning him and his mother. Once again the mother is the crucial emotional force of the film. The 1980s saw Yash Chopra go through a rough patch as one after another - **Nakhuda** (1981), **Silsila** (1981) (trying to capitalize on the real life Amitabh-Jaya Bhaduri-Rekha triangle), **Sawal** (1982), **Mashaal** (1984), **Faasle** (1985), **Vijay** (1988) all flopped. However **Chandni** (1989), a love triangle with memorable music and a great central performance by Sridevi, brought him back in the reckoning. **Lamhe** (1991), a beautiful and sensitive film of cross-generational love however did not go down with audiences who found it incestuous though there are many who regard it to be Yash Chopra's best film. **Parampara** (1992) done for an outside producer was a misfire, but **Darr** (1993), a sympathetic look at obsessive love and an emotion often overlooked in love - fear, was a trendsetter leading to several other films of the same type.

His film **Dil to Paagal hai** (1997), a love triangle with the musical theatre as the backdrop is refreshingly young and hip as it plays off against the traditional beliefs of an ordinary girl (Madhuri Dixit) that she would find true love someday. Though a huge success at the box office it was met with lukewarm critical response. His last film till date **Veer-Zaara** (2004) is yet another successful film of Yash Chopra.

Today his son Aditya too has become a filmmaker and has kept the Yashraj Films Banner flying high first with **Dilwaale Dulhania le jaayenge** (1995), the Banner's biggest success and perhaps the best mainstream Hindi Film of the last six years.



Apart from his brother, Chopra was influenced by three other persons, all of whom were senior to him, Guru Dutt, Mehboob Khan director of **Mother India** and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

For Chopra each film is a landmark and memorable experience. He breaks his life into three milestones. The first is the release of **Dhool Ka Phool**. The second is the film **Daag**, the new production house Yash Raj Films first venture. **Daag** is a romantic melodrama with several twists and an ending that could only work in a Hindi film. The film starred the top actors of the early 1970s. After that, the third milestone was the release of **Dilwale Dulhania le Jayenge** directed by his son Aditya. The film turned into a huge hit.

In addition to the melodrama of **Daag**, Chopra's career in the 1970s was defined by the powerful dramatic scripts written by Salim Khan and Javed Akhtar. The themes were not novel, but the approach, angry confrontations between father and son (**Trishul**), and between brothers (**Deewar**) had a tremendous mass appeal. In the process Chopra also defined the angry young man image of Amitabh Bachchan. In 1973, the struggling actor had played the role of an angry cop in another Salim-Javed scripted film, director Prakash Mehra's **Zanjeer**. By all accounts **Kabhi kabhi** is one of the most romantic films made in India.

In the 1980s, Chopra moved away from the loud booming scripts of the Salim-Javed team. After two decades, Chopra recently reconnected with Javed-Akhtar who wrote the lyrics for Yash Raj Films' latest production, **Mere Yaar ki Shaadi hai**. The much-hyped **Silsila**, a romantic triangle with Bachchan, wife Jaya and Rekha played on the real life tale of the three stars that was staple for gossip film magazines. Unfortunately, the audience did not take to the movie. In the late 1980s Chopra directed **Chandni** and **Lamhe**. The two films were rich with melodious songs and stunning locations - from the rolling hills of Europe to the-barren desert landscapes of Rajasthan. **Chandni** was a big hit, while **Lamhe's** story line did not work well with the audience in India. His highly successful period began in 1989 with '**Chandni**', a huge box-office success, a film with all the hallmarks of what has come to be known as the Yash Chopra style: heroine-oriented, romantic, emotional, depicting the lifestyle of the super elite, with super hit music used in songs pictured in foreign locations. It is known also for its outstanding technical values, notably the camerawork of Manmohan Singh. It also showed a return to working with an established heroine, Sri Devi, rather than trying to introduce newcomers.

In 90's Yash Chopra's own favourite film, **Lamhe**, divided the audience on a class basis: it was hugely popular with metropolitan elites and the overseas market, which allowed it to break even, but it had a poor box-office response (largely lower class, especially the repeat audience) because of its supposed incest theme. The 90s also saw Chopra once again adapting to the changing times. He cast a relatively successful actor Shahrukh Khan as a stalker as an obsessive lover in **Darr**. As Khan



became a star sensation, Chopra cast him again in **Dil to Pagal hai**. He also appeared in the two films directed by Aditya Chopra. Yash Chopra's film, **Dil to Pagal hai**, a triangular love story, develops a new visual style in Hindi cinema. It is the first film to feature jazz dancers (Shiamak Davar's troupe), has a new-look scene created by Sharmista Roy and Manish Malhotra and its music by Uttam Singh, a music director new to Bollywood, broke all music sales.

Like a colossus that straddles two worlds, Yash Chopra paints on two canvases. Here, in red, is a universe of pain, anger, rejection and rebellion. There, in purple and pink, is the inner landscape suffused with the myriad hues of that primordial emotion: love. The genius of Chopra is precisely in this two-pronged forte. For, while directors, by and large, carve a niche for themselves in a particular kind of cinema-action, romance, comedy, melodrama - Chopra seemed to have uttered the last word in two worlds, that of anger and rebellion in **Deewar** and the agony and ecstasy of love in films like **Kabhi-Kabhi**, **Silsila**, **Lamhe** and **Darr**. The master craftsman that Chopra is, he succeeded in sculpting two worlds-which are equally complete in their own way. The angry young man might have been first created by Salim and Javed in Prakash Mehra's **Zanjeer**, but the image acquired flesh and blood in Chopra's **Deewar**. It was here, as a petty dock worker-turned smuggler, that the character of Vijay, played time and again by Amitabh Bachchan, grew iconic in proportion. Till, date, Vijay Verma remains one of the most consummate study of anger and rebellion in popular cinema. One that spawned a series of clones in the years to come, ever since **Deewar** created a storm at the box office in 1975.

The success of **Deewar** largely lay in the fact that brought to the fore a new hero. One who was drawn from a different milieu altogether. When it came to retelling tales of poverty in films, it was mostly the rural poor that had hitherto found representation in popular cinema. For the rest, the characters were usually drawn from the frightfully rich or the comfortable middle class. Here for the first time was a hero who not only emerged from the working class, but whose silence and suppressed rage lent a voice to the angst of the urban poor. The unprecedented migration of destitute villagers into cities and towns had manifested itself in a mushrooming of slums all over. There in the underbelly of every big city were the hundreds of haphazard bustees (slum-dwellings), spilling over with the down and the outs, the unemployed, the underpaid strugglers and drifters.

The character of Vijay encountered a second coming in Chopra's next film, **Trishul**. Coming close on the heels of **Deewar**, **Trishul** re-created the angry splendour of the earlier protagonist. Only this time, the fury was more personalized and focused. It was directed towards, a single person - the man who walked out on his beloved, leaving him to bear and breed his illegitimate child. All for the sake of a prosperous business career. Vijay never forgave his father (Sanjeev Kumar) for his desertion and neglect and returned twenty years later, with just one seething desire: revenge. The



man must pay for his misdemeanours and account for his abandoned wife's anguish, believed the vengeance-prone son.

Chopra's fascination with the element of anger in Amitabh Bachchan's screen personae extended beyond, the frontiers of revenge films like **Deewar** and **Trishul**. It flowed into his love stories too and the angry young lover of **Kabhi Kabhi** and **Silsila** gradually took up the gauntlet that was laid down by Vijay Verma, the angry avenger of **Deewar** and **Trishul**. In terms of its reach, Chopra's canvas was shrinking ever since he completed **Deewar**.

In **Kabhi Kabhi** and **Silsila**, the director had passed over into the realm of love. Here was the coupling of two souls - a story of their coming together and falling apart. Obviously, in this two-soul story of agony and ecstasy, there were no spaces to incorporate any concern for the greatest good of the greatest numbers.

As in **Silsila**, too, where Bachchan is forced to give up the beautiful Chandni for the more homely Jaya Bhaduri. Chandni (Rekha), the woman whom he wooed with poetry and red roses. Bhaduri is the woman he married, simply because she was his dead brother's betrothed and the prospective mother of the dead man's child. Bachchan had to forgo his passion for the sake of propriety again and he had to save his brother's child from the curse of illegitimacy. Nevertheless, this was once again a marriage of convenience soured by the rancour of 'sacrifice and self-abnegation.

**Silsila**, which went on to become an adult look at extramarital affairs, may have suffered due to the director's penchant for gloss. For Chopra's two-pronged virtuosity spilled over from his two dimensional thematic concerns. If films like **Deewar** and **Trishul** carried the smell of the sweat of the lower middle class in the first few reels, then **Kabhi Kabhi**, **Silsila**, **Chandni**, **Lamhe** and those that came later reveled in a purely upper middle class ambience. One which was extremely ornate, scenic and luxuriant, in terms of set, background, the sartorial sense of the protagonists, their accessories and their life-styles. If an entire song sequence which hinged around the word 'flower' could be shot against the tulip fields of Holland, then **Lamhe** could have the protagonists flying from a haveli (mansion) in Rajasthan to a chalet in England. All within a single sweep that steers across the world of the bold and the beautiful, the rich and the famous. So much so that sometimes the emphasis on form diverts the attention from content and leaves the drama with a hollow ring. In **Silsila**, apart from a few encounters, there is little of the tumult of unfulfilled desire, the pain of being cheated. or even the tightening bind of tradition. Tradition is a very important word in the lexicon of Chopra's oeuvre. The filmmaker's battle is not so much between good and evil, black and white. No, here there are no conventional heroes and villains. Only convention itself.

A similar penchant for orderliness weaves its way into his more experimental film, **Darr**. Thematically orthodox, the film tried to dissect the darker and more



devious aspects of love, albeit a love that grows into an all-consuming obsession. Here, in this extreme state of emotion, there seems to be no place for the rational mind. So that the protagonist Rahul (Shahrukh Khan) lives on the precipice-always doing a tightrope walk between sanity and insanity. When the string will snap, no one really knows. For his obsessive love for Kiran (Juhi Chawla) fudges all distinctions between right and wrong. In this condition of emotional inebriation, where possession of the object of desire becomes the sole objective everything can be justified even murder. Hence, Rahul righteously tries to wipe out anyone who comes in the way of his possession of Kiran. This includes two policemen, his best friend and an attempt on the life of Kiran's husband too. And all along, this demented lover justifies his peccadilloes before an imagined presence of his long-dead mother in the confines of his macabre room.

Nevertheless, the unorthodoxy is confined till here only. Once the triangular tale of love has been laid down in all its demoniac shades, the director conscientiously returns to the old order. Not for intensity of the outsiders blow. In a minute is the sanctity of the marriage imperiled, despite the intensity of the outsider's blow. In fact, the husband almost returns from the dead to save his beleaguered wife from the hands of her psychotic lover. Thus, although part of the success of **Darr** lay in the novel characterization of Rahul as the prototypal anti-hero, its box-office success lay in its steadfast adherence to accepted conjugal bonds. Rahul, with his energetic and frenzied ravings might have succeeded in imbuing heroic shades to his negativity. Nevertheless, in the final confrontation, it is positive goodness, embodied in the good, clean, normal hero that walks away victoriously.

The only film in which Yash Chopra dared to digress from the traditional path was **Lamhe**. Here for the first time popular Hindi cinema witnesses the consummation of a totally unconventional relationship between Pooja (Srividevi) who falls in love with Viren (Anil Kapoor), who loved her mother, Pallavi a man who was not only the father-figure in her orphaned life, he was the man who could have been her father too, if her mother had reciprocated his ardour. Predictably the film did not do well at the box office, despite the novel theme and the prevalence of all the Chopra essentials: lilting music, scenic backdrops, flesh and blood characters, intense portrayals and an emphasis on matters of the heart. The failure of the film was a clear pointer to the conventional tastes of the viewer who was not willing to experiment with tradition, established morality, old-fashioned ethics and behavioural codes. Father-figures in the Indian familial hierarchy could never become lovers. Hence the sceptical viewer's disapproval of a film like **Lamhe**. Nevertheless, despite its inability to whip up a favourable response at the box office, **Lamhe** remains a landmark film. Rarely has the woman in Indian cinema been depicted as an iconoclast who is willing to stand up against established mores. So what are the high points of Chopra's oeuvre then? Eventually, the director emerges as a celluloid poet of love who weaves the magic



with emotions alone. The usual bugbears of garish violence born out of an overpowering death-wish does not infect his cinema. His is the Keatsian world of moonlight, poetry, roses and music. A beautiful world peopled by beautiful characters, where the villain of the plot is largely destiny. His characters bear no semblance to the breed of Rambo and do not kowtow the cult of the biceps at all. Good, clean, people, belonging mostly to the upper middle class, they mirror the mores and luxuriant life-styles of the higher echelons. Story-wise, Chopra's narratives unfold in purple and pink - colours and themes that make him one of the last romantics in popular cinema of the last two decades.

### **Awards & Honours:**

He was awarded Padma Bhushan (India's third highest civilian Award in 2004). Dada Saheb Phalke Award in 2002, Filmfare Award for Best Film **Dil To Pagal Hai** in 1997, Filmfare Award for Best Film **Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge** in 1995, Filmfare Award for Best Film **Lamhe** in 1991, Filmfare Award for Best Director **Deewaar** in 1975, Filmfare Award for Best Director for **Daag** in 1973, Filmfare Award for Best Director for **Ittefaq** in 1969, Filmfare Award for Best Director for **Waqt** in 1965.



# DEV ANAND

## Evergreen Hero

“I am in search of a dream he writes in his diary. I have only thirty rupees in my pocket but I am not afraid. I trust my spirit.”

Effervescent, high spirited, age defying handsome urban gentlemanly persona brings the picture of Dev Anand to our mind.

He was born Devdutt Pichorima Anand in Gurdaspur, Punjab, the middle son of a well-to-do advocate. He graduated in English literature from the Government College, Lahore. He wanted to go to England for higher studies, but his family could not afford it. This didn't dampen his spirits. He left for Mumbai to join elder brother Chetan Anand in the IPTA.

Dev Anand's career trajectory witnessed initial hiccups and these transitory perturbations helped shape a brilliant personality that was to rule a considerable domain of film world. He had to sell some of his belongings and even work in the Military Censor's office reading soldiers' letters to their families.

His first assignment came with Prabhat's **Hum ek hain** (1946) but the film didn't do anything at all for his career. However, at Prabhat, he met the young choreographer of the film, Guru Dutt. A friendship blossomed between the two of them. They promised each other that if Guru Dutt were to turn film maker he would take Dev as his hero and if Dev were to produce film then he would take Guru Dutt as its director.

After a few desultory years at Prabhat, Dev Anand decided to return to Mumbai where the real action was. After his shift to Mumbai he met one of the leading singer-heroines of Mumbai, Suraiya. Dev Anand and Suraiya's first film – together was **Jeet**. Although the film didn't do too well they fell passionately in love with each other. While Suraiya's mother approved of the match, it turned out that her grandmother didn't. The press found a ready-made scoop and went for them in a big way. Pressurized on all sides Suraiya decided to break with him. Heartbroken Dev Anand went home and cried on brother Chetan's shoulders. In the long run the break turned out to be professionally beneficial as none of the film in which Dev and Suraiya were paired together did well at the box office.



Dev Anand's star brightened considerably in the film firmament with his lead role enaction in Bombay Talkies' film **Ziddi** opposite Kamini Kaushal establishing him firmly on the pedestal of leading heroes of Mumbai.

In the year 1949 Dev Anand launched Navketan with elder brother Chetan Anand. Vijay Anand, master director and younger brother, teamed up with them in 1953. Navketan's first offering was **Afsar** (1950) starring Dev and lady love Suraiya and was directed by elder brother Chetan. The film however flopped at the box office. Dev, remembering his promise to Guru Dutt-invited him to make a film for Navketan.

Year 1951 saw the release of **Baazi**, Guru Dutt's directional debut. The film written by actor Balraj Sahni was a trendsetter of sorts leading to the spate of urban crime thrillers Bollywood churned out in the 1950s. The film took Dev Anand to dramatic star status. It was also the beginning of seeing Dev Anand play mostly hard-bitten characters living in the urban underbelly.

Dev Anand's love for Suraiya could not culminate into a wedlock as she failed to go against her grandmother's will. Ironically her career went on the downslide and Dev's career trajectory witnessed a constant upward trend, a total reversal of the days when they went around and she was a bigger star:

The next pairing of Dev Anand and Guru Dutt was **Jaal** (1952). Dev played a heartless smuggler who only repents right at the end of the film. It was a finely shaded performance but the film didn't do too well at the box office. The partnership came to an end when Guru Dutt decided to act in his own films.

Dev meanwhile went from strength to strength and along with Dilip Kumar and Raj Kapoor ruled the Hindi Film industry in the 1950s. They were known as the 'Trimurty' of Bollywood. Anand's good look and fun-filled and yet meaningful films ensured him a very special niche in the public psyche.

However, in between his lover boy roles like **Munimjee** (1955), and **Paying Guest** (1957), Dev repeatedly played shaded roles such as the pickpocket in **Pocketmaar** (1955), the absconding gang member in **Dushman** (1957), the black-marketer in **Kala Bazar** (1960), or the murderer in **Bombay ka Babu** (1960) though by now his starry mannerisms – his sing-song dialogue delivery, his puff in his hair, his total nonchalance were part of every character he played. Consequently he was never rated too high as a performer but to be fair to him, he did give a fine performance under Raj Khosla as the anguished son trying to prove his father's innocence in **Kala Pani** (1958), winning a Filmfare Award for the same, **Hum Dono** (1961) saw him excel in a double role and **Guide** (1965) saw a perfectly nuanced performance from him, perhaps the best of his career.



The character of Raju guide was yet another shaded character he played. Dev played him with just the right shade of grey-humanising him with all faults yet getting the audience to sympathise with him. It was a wonderful performance fetching him his second Filmfare Best Actor Award.

In 1965 Dev works to get the filming rights of **Guide**. The cast is finalized and Mehboob studio is booked three weeks prior to the shooting, Chetan Anand, the director drops a bombshell: He cannot shoot **Guide** because the long due permission from the government to shoot – **Haqueqat** on the NEFA border has come through and he wants to shoot this film before winter sets in. Overnight, Dev Anand is stranded without a director. He contacts Raj Khosla. Raj Khosla agrees but backs out a few days later because he cannot cope with the Navketan pace of working. A week before the shooting, a harassed Dev turns to Vijay Anand in desperation, ‘Goldie’, you are the man of the moment, you’ll direct **Guide**. Goldie accepts the challenge. The film is shot in two languages. English and Hindi, both shot independently. It was an expensive project but is worth the effort. The Hindi version was nominated for the Oscar.

Dev Anand entered the 1970s on a high with **Johnny Mera Naam** (1970) and also too to direction with **Prem Pujari** (1970). This was the first film officially directed by Dev Anand. It is the story of an army man determined to destroy a spy ring and save his country. His best efforts in this field were **Hare Rama Hare Krishna** (1971) and **Des Pardes** (1978). The former, set amongst Hare Krishna cultists (presented as dope-smoking hippies) was Dev Anand’s call to nationalist Indian values and by far the best film he ever directed. The film launched the carrier of Zeenat Aman who made a tremendous impact as his sister in the middle of the cultists.

**Hare Rama Hare Krishna** is released and is a super hit and so in Zeenat Aman. But the audience finds Zeenat too westernized to accept her in the traditional heroine’s role and the Zeenat was offered only vamp. It was a depressing situation. Eventually, to solve the problem Dev launched a special film for Zeenat, **Heera Panna**. The attempt was fruitful. After **Heera Panna** Zeenat was flooded with offers from successful film-makers like Nasir Hussain, Manoj Kumar and B.R. Chopra.

In 1974 Dev Anand met the King of Bhutan at his coronation ceremony during the shooting of **Jewel Thief**, (A cult film of sorts, it had the bars, and snow lifts and catchy numbers *ye dil na hot bechara* and *Hoton pe aise baat*) in Sikkim. Anand decided to work in the hills. The film is **Ishq Ishq Ishq**. innumerable directors before Dev, including John Houston, had tried to shoot in the mountains but had returned dissatisfied because it was not practical. But Dev in his obsession makes the impossible possible. All the time a helicopter waits in



the vicinity in case somebody is sick and has to be flown to Pokhara. And this happened everyday. Except Dev Anand, who did not fall sick. He used to go for long walks in the hills. But he was disappointed because the King of Bhutan died suddenly. “*I feel I have cheated the King of a promise*” said Dev. This endeavour put Navketan in a financial soup.

Dev launched **Des Perdes** with Tina Munim. It is a film Dev Anand enjoyed shooting the most. Anand was proud of not just the film but also his discovery Tina Munim. On the problems of illegal immigrants the film introduced Tina Munim as a village innocent being sent abroad to marry a man she did not know.

**Swami Dada (1982):** is the story of a Godman spreading the philosophy of peace to mankind. One of the roles in the story calls for a foreign actress. Dev flies to U.S.A., interviews numerous girls and screen tests them and Christine O’Neil is selected.

## Awards & Honours:

Year	Film	Award
1958	<b>Kala Pani</b>	Filmfare Award Best Actor
1966	<b>Guide</b>	Filmfare Award Best Film
1966	<b>Guide</b>	Filmfare Award Best Actor
1992		Filmfare Lifetime Achievement Award
2001		Padma Bhushan (India’s third highest Civilian Award)
2002		Dada Saheb Phalke Award

## Filmography:

### Major films:

1950 – **Afsar**, A journalist is mistaken for a government official and gets a close, first-hand look at politics in a village. The film starred Suraiya and Dev Anand.

1952- **Jaal**, The redemption of a crook by the love of a good woman – the film has the haunting number *Yeh raat yeh chandni phir kahan* and Guru Dutt’s able direction.

1954-**Baadhan, Taxi Driver**, One of the popular Navketan films. It starred Dev Anand and Kalpana Kartik who was to later become his wife.



1955-**Munimji**, A tale of two brothers one good and the other evil, the film included the hit of the year *Jeevan ke safar mein raahi*.

1956-**CID**, The first Hindi film of Waheeda Rehman, one of India's greatest stars. Her performance and beauty enhanced this crime thriller that was the directorial debut of Raj Khosla, a highly competent director.

1957 - **Paying Guest**, One of Navketan's best films, starring Nutan in one of her finest performances. The hit songs *Mana janaab ne pukaara nahin* and *O nigahen mastaana* remain hummable even today.

1958 - **Kala Pani**, Memorable acting by all the stars – Dev Anand, Madhubala (among India's finest actresses) and Nalini Jaywant. The film centers on corruption and an innocent man's plight.

1960 - **Kaala Bazaar**, Fantasy and reality coexist in this film directed by Vijay Anand. The use of the top-angle camera for the song *Sooraj ke jaisi golayi, chanda se thandak bhi paye* was interesting and recalls Dev Anand's statement that movies be 'brought as close as possible to the reading of a newspaper'.

1961 - **Jab Pyar Kisise Hota Hai**,

1963 - **Tere Ghar Ke Saamne**,

1965-**Guide**, A major film on the release of a woman from a tyrannical marriage, her fulfillment as a dancer, and the man who helps her realize her dreams. Dev Anand transforms from guide to manager to holy man, and the process of love and desire culminates in him dying after achieving a 'miracle'. Waheeda Rehman's powerful acting and the music added to the film's stature, even though many social critics attacked the film on different counts.

Guide included the highly emotive numbers *Kaanton se kheench ke yeh aanachal* and *Gaata rahe mera dil* set to music by Sachin Dev Burman,

— **Teen Deviyen** (1965),

**Jewel Thief** (1965), A cult film of sorts, it had the bars, and snow-lifts and catchy numbers that marked the period.

1969-**Mahal**, Prem Pujari.

1970-**Johnny Mera Naam**, This was the first officially directed by Dev Anand. The story is of an army man determined to destroy spy ring and save his country.

1971 - **Hare Rama Hare Krishna**, The film centers on drug addicts and their way of life as opposed to Indian values. Zeenat Aman's debut film, it had the smash hit *Dum maro dum*.



- **Tere Mere Sapne,**

1978 - **Des Pardes.** On the problems of illegal immigrants, the film introduced Tina Munim as a village innocent being sent abroad to marry a man she doesn't know.

1984 - **Anand Aur Anand.** Dev Anand's son, Suneil Anand's launch vehicle, the film failed miserably at the box office.



# MRINAL SEN

## Pivot of Populist Voice

**M**RINAL Sen was born in 1923 in Faridpur (now in Bangladesh). He came over to Kolkata and studied science there. Marxist ideas and ideology had a great impact on him. He used to read a lot about films and aesthetics and write film reviews. He joined IPTA (Indian People's Theatre Association). A book titled *Film* by Rudoff Arnheim stirred him and he started taking serious interest in films. His films nestled in leftist idealism focusing mainly on social and political issues and the crisis in middle class life. His first film was **Raat Bhore** in 1956, his second movie **Neel Akasher Nichey** (Under the blue sky) was banned by the government for two months in 1958. **Baishey Sraavan** (A wedding day) (1960) was a love story. **Akash Kusum** (the day dream) (1965). **Ekdin Pratidin** (1979) and **Kharij** (1982) – bring forth the middle class urban life complexities.

**Ek din Pratidin** (And quite rolls the dawn, 1979), Sen appears to have done away with high pitched rhetoric in favour of more individual concerns. Narration soaked in sense of humour progresses where the life of an average family is unfolded. A young woman – the sole bread earner does not return home from work. Tension builds up with the growing night. Eruption of resentment takes place. Hospitals and morgues are searched. The robe of respectability is torn apart. At the dawn the girl returns and so does normalacy in the family atmosphere. Film traverses through various shades of family's mental agonies from anxiety to embarrassment and helplessness.

**Kharij** (the case is closed): This film won Sen the special jury award at Cannes. A domestic help (boy) dies in a unventilated kitchen one winter night from carbon monoxide poisoning. The household is plunged into crisis. The police enquiry and post mortem results in ugly accusation among the family members though in the end the opinion converges to the fact that nobody is to be blamed. This film casts an intelligent and extraordinary light on the ordinary situation and affirms Sen's new concern with the individual. In an intelligently handled scene towards the end of the film, the dead boy's father returns to the house of the employers. As he comes up the stairs, a confrontation is expected, but he stops, stares at couple, then raises his hands to bid them goodbye and walks away. This scene imparts compassion and dignity to the character.



**Bhuvan Shome**, the first low budget film financed by the government was a landmark in Indian film history, as its success encouraged official sponsorship of the “art” cinema which began the Indian ‘New Wave’. This time set in Gujarat and made in Hindi, it tells the story of an “honest” bureaucrat whose colonial values are undermined by one of Sen’s most charming characters—an unsophisticated village girl.

Sen’s work reveals many outside influences yet he retains his uniqueness in presenting these assimilated themes.

**Punascha** (Over again, 1961) is another case of a dissection of marital conflict. A young woman instead of usual traditional domestic role opts for economic independence. The film brings out sham modernity of her suitor as well as the hypocrisy of her middle class family. This marital theme continues in two films **Abasheshe** (And at last, 1963) and **Pratinidhi** (The representative, 1964). The former is a farce on divorce Indian style in which a couple quarrel, separate and reunite. In **Pratinidhi**, a young man falls in love with and marries a widow with a child from previous marriage. Their married life, despite all efforts grows increasingly difficult and finally collapses. **Akash Kusum** (Upto in the clouds, 1965), pictures a young man trying to gain success in Kolkata’s competitive business world by means of bluff and happens to meet a rich man’s daughter and they fall in love. He is desperate to break the wealth barrier. In this process he gets trapped in a maze of deceit from which he cannot extricate himself. It is a commentary on urban class structure – an attempt to escape the restrictions of conventional narrative with a more fragmented form to match the rhythm of metropolitan life. Sen’s anxiety to find a valid cinematic style and the influence of new wave films is all too apparent.

Sen’s eclecticism is not confined to film form. It transcends language barrier and stylized subjects. When **Akash Kusum** despite generating controversy and all its effervescence failed at box office, Sen moved outside Bengal to make an Oriya film **Matira Manisha** (Two brothers, 1966) based on Kalindicharan Panigrahi’s novel of village life in which there is a clash over ancestral property between two brothers in a rural background. Heavily laden with symbolism, and melodrama this turns out to be a damp squib.

Sen made **Bhuvan Shome** (1969) keeping in mind a wider audience. An incredibly low budget (Rs. 15,000) film heralded an era for “art” or “parallel” or new Indian cinema. The background is in Gujarat – A bureaucrat (enacted by Utpal Dutt), a lovingly eccentric fellow finds himself completely misplaced while away on a duck shooting where he had a chance meeting with a frothy, high spirited village girl who refuses to take him seriously. Bureaucrat’s intimate contact with the nature begins to overwhelm him and he gets rid of his pomposity and self-importance. An ambiguous relationship between the old disciplinarian bureaucrat and carefree



uninhibited young woman is full of delightful surprises and gentle satire. Its fresh look and Gujarat's unique landscape imparts a hypnotic aura to the film.

**Ek Adhuri Kahani (An unfinished story, 1972)** – It was not a satisfactory film. Its backdrop is economic crisis in a sugar mill in depression years. It was an unsuccessful blending of newsreel style and high drama. This attempt prompted his passage to a new phase of film making pivoted on the contemporary temper (food riots, strikes, police brutality and political violence) which gained an unusual set of epithets as polemical, pamphleteering and agitation propagandist.

**Interview (1970)** – It is Sen's resolute embarking upon a more radical, overtly political kind of cinema. This refers to a young man's desperate efforts to secure a lucrative job in an Indo-British company. But his ambition is shattered for lack of a Western style suit. The only one he possesses is in a laundry whose workers are on strike. A borrowed one is lost during a journey. Finally he appears in a typical Bengali Babu style in the interview and it causes his rejection. Suit symbolizes British colonialism and the angry young man, in an act of defiance smashes a shop window, displaying a well dressed mannequin. Its ideological extension was **Calcutta (1972)**.

**Calcutta (1972)** – The film consists of three separate stories that take place over a period of forty years. The link is an imaginary, timeless young man who understands the causes of poverty and exploitation and who feels change can only be effected through violence, of which, ironically, he becomes a victim in the end. The film was made during the highly explosive period of Naxalite militancy, which rejecting all forms of parliamentary politics, had taken to arms. Sen tried to focus attention on more fundamental issues like exploitation and poverty.

**Padatik (The Guerilla Fighter, 1973)**: The last of the trilogy, concerns a political 'extremist' who escapes from police custody and is sheltered by an unconventional woman who is separated from her husband and lives alone. Cut off from the mainstream of political life, the fugitive engages in soul searching and reassessment of the politics and contradictions of the leftist movement. Left wing politics was a controversial subject at the time and the film created quite a stir.

**Chorus (1974)** was the last of Sen's agitation-propaganda films.

Sen's political films had won him a small following – among the radical youth while the larger public remained generally indifferent. Accustomed to conventional narrative, the stylization and fragmented form of these films confused and bewildered them.

With **Mrigaya (The Royal Hunt, 1976)** which marked a different phase in the film making career, Sen returned to the formal narrative and the rural environment. Made in Hindi, during the emergency, the story of a tribal youth had parallels with the political situation in the country. Loosely based on the 1901 Santhal revolt a



young tribal (the popular star Mithun Chakravorty's debut) and a British administrator share passion and powers as hunters and develop a warm relationship, while a relationship is drawn with objectivity, a somewhat strident note is struck at the end when the titles proclaim 'Stand up, stand up!' remember the martyrs.

**Oka Ori Katha (The Outsider, 1947)** – The Telugu film marks a new trend and style in Sen's career. The film based on Premchand's famous short story, *Kafan*, describes how, after the death of a woman, her destitute husband and father in law fritter away all the money for her *shradh* on drink. In the sequence after wife's death, Sen departs significantly from author Premchand. The *shradh* money is not spent on liquor; instead the old man clings on to it because the living need it more than the dead.

Sen moves out of the claustrophobic middle class milieu of Kolkata to the splendid ruins of a Zamindar's country estate in **Khandhar** (The Ruins, 1983, Hindi), film.

**Ek Din Achanak** (Suddenly one day, 1988) has superficial resemblance with his earlier **Ek Din Pratidin**. Here, the disappearance of the protagonist is more mysterious and leaves room for endless speculation. The story concerns a distinguished academic benign and well behaved who goes out for a walk on a wet day and does not return. In the process, the man, his moral, his achievements and his interpersonal relations are argued over by members of his family. The film moves back and forth in time, with fragmented encounters between the professor and others, which build a portrait of a man who despite all his academic distinction emerges as ordinary.

In 1991 in **Mahaprithvi** (World within, World without) Sen returned to the same theme-the sudden disappearance of a family member and its repercussions.

With big appetite for assimilation of thoughts and ideas from any source, his impact on Indian cinema was phenomenal. Keen analysis of the role to be enacted accentuates his ability and he nestles himself in a higher echelon far above the other contemporaries.

## Filmography:

*Raat Bhore*, (1955), *Neel Akasher Niche*, (1958), *Baishey Sravana*, (1960), *Punascha*, (1961), *Abasheshe*, (1963), *Protinidhi*, (1964), *Akash Kusum*, (1965), *Matira Manisha*, (1966), *Bhuvan Shome*, (1969), *Interview*, (1969), *Ek Adhuri Kahani*, (1971), *Calcutta 71*, (1972), *Padatik*, (1973), *Chorus*, (1974), *Mrigaya*, (1976), *Oka Ori Katha*, (1977), *Parashuram*, (1978), *Ek Din Pratidin*, (1979), *Akaler Shandhaney*, (1980), *Chalchitra*, (1981), *Kharij*, (1982), *Khandahar*, (1983), *Genesis*, (1986), *Ek Din Achanak*, (1989), *Mahaprithivi*, (1991), *Antareen*, (1993), *Aamar Bhuban*, (2002).



# ADOOR GOPALAKRISHNAN

## A Man of Vision

**A**DOOR Gopalakrishnan was born in Pathana Inthitta district of Kerala on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1941 into a family which traditionally patronized and practiced Kathakali. From the age of 8, when he made his theatre debut, he has been actively involved in theatre. His lower and primary school education was at Vadakkedathukaavu, Koltara and at Adoor high school. His pre-university education was at Pandalam NSS College. He graduated in Economics and Political Science from Gandhi Gram Rural University (Madurai) in 1960. After graduating from the Film and Television Institute he helped in the production and distribution of non commercial films.

At present Adoor Gopalakrishnan is a man of inspiration for the cine-world. He was highly influenced by the works of Satyajit Ray and his films borrowed Ray's technique of emphasizing the psychology of the characters through gestures. Satyajit Ray's role in revolutionizing Indian Cinema during 1950s with his first film **Pather Panchali** was taken up by Adoor Gopalakrishnan in Kerala and create a drastic change in Malayalam Cinema. His first film **Swayamvaram**, in 1972, pioneered the new wave Cinema in Kerala.

Apart from his films, Adoor's major contribution towards introducing a new cinema culture in Kerala was the constitution of the first Film Society in Kerala, 'Chalachitra.' He also took active part in the constitution of 'Chitralekha', Kerala's first Film Co-operative Society for film production. These movements triggered a fresh wave of good films, called 'art films' by director like Aravindan, P.A. Becker, K.G. George, Pavithran, Raveendran etc. At a time this movement was so strong that even the popular cinema had to make synthesis with art cinema to create a new genre of films.

Adoor Gopalakrishnan was gentle, shy, humble, and quite unlike the street savvy image of the young "alternative" filmmaker of his time. He is still the same man after all his years of creative experience and recognition as perhaps the most significant filmmaker in India in the generation after Satyajit Ray.

Adoor's themes have continued to be defiantly unusual. His meticulous craftsmanship reveals an orderly, but exciting, and analytical mind, striving for perfection. Yet his films never lose their broad human perspective, or their wry subliminal humour. He probes the dark interiors of the human mind with as much ease as he skims across the surface of daily existence. The beguiling simplicity



of his films often lures the viewer into dangerous and unexpected depths of self-perception.

In **Kodiyettam**, the scene had shifted from the city to the countryside, and the focus from the external to the internal. Sankrankutty's salvation lies in his growing awareness, his moving away from a physical existence of no real meaning towards a fulfilling emotional experience, from simple receptivity to a complex realization of life.

In **Elippathayam**, Gopalakrishnan's search reached new depths. Unni and Rajamma, bound by tradition and refusing to face the complex reality that lies outside the separate prisons of their lives, are unable to break free and eventually destroy themselves.

If **Elippathayam** explored a shadow world of the past threatened by change, **Mukhamukham** examined the confrontation between truth and illusion in the atmosphere of a decaying political ideology. Sreedharan, a charismatic leader of the Communist Party, suddenly returns from oblivion. In the ten years between his disappearance and his return, his memory had kept him alive as an unchanging truth. But truth does not stand still, and this new Sreedharan, more than any of his old comrades, seems to carry the full burden of the confusion and apathy of the new age.

Adoor's next film, **Mathilukal**, is based on a brief interlude in the life of Vaikom Muhammed Basheer, one of the most original writers from Kerala. A political prisoner in the last years of British rule, Basheer wrote about his experiences in a short novel of the same name. For Adoor it was the story of how a writer, an artist, surrounded by prison walls, can transcend them with his creativity. He can even create a woman for company and get inextricably involved with his own creation. "At another level," he said, "it is a film about freedom. It asks the fundamental question of what freedom really means."

**Vidheyan** examines the immobilizing force of power and a man's eventual freedom from it. A degenerate, whimsical landlord takes over the life of Thommi, an immigrant landless labourer, making him a mute and passive accessory to many acts of untold cruelty. Finally, when nemesis overtakes him, Thommi is still at his side, but no longer in thrall.

Kunjunni, a country boy turned leftist radical is the protagonist of **Kathapurusham**, Adoor's latest film, slated to be shown at the 1997 San Francisco International Film Festival. In this powerful commentary on his own times, Adoor goes back to the politically turbulent years between 1937 and 1980, charting Kunjunni's journey through life against the background of the Independence movement, and later the rise and fall of the left movement in Kerala.



## Awards & Honours:

<b>Swayamvaram</b>	:	National Awards for Best Film, Best Direction and Best Photography.
<b>Kodiyettam</b>	:	National Awards for Best Regional Film and Best Actor
<b>Elippathayam</b>	:	National Awards for Best Regional Film and Best Audiography
<b>Mukhamukham</b>	:	National Awards for Best Direction, Best Screenplay and Best Audiography
<b>Anantharam</b>	:	National Awards for Best Direction, Best Screenplay and Best Audiography
<b>Mathilukal</b>	:	National Awards for Best Direction, Best Audiography and Best Regional Film
<b>Vidheyam</b>	:	National Awards for Best Regional Film
<b>Kathapurusham</b>	:	National Awards for Best Film and Best Supporting Actress

Adoor Gopalakrishnan, who has blazed the celluloid with a string of meaningful pictures, received the Dadasaheb Phalke Award for 2004 for his outstanding contribution in the field of Indian Cinema as President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam presented the National Film Awards 2004 to the cream of mainstream and creative cinema. The 64 years old Adoor, one of the torchbearers of Indian creative cinema, was given a standing ovation by a packed audience as he was bestowed with the country's highest award for cinematic genius.



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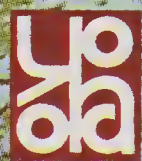








One man who probably understood the art and technique of filmmaking better than most of his contemporaries was Dadasaheb Phalke. His landmark film 'Raja Harishchandra' is considered as India's first feature film. Dadasaheb Phalke Awards, instituted in the memory of this icon of Indian cinema, are given every year since 1969 to those film personalities who have made outstanding contribution to the growth and development of Indian cinema in various ways. From Devika Rani in 1969 to Adoor Gopalakrishnan in 2004, the awardees include actors, actresses, directors, producers, singers and music directors, a wide canvas of creativity and ingenuity which constitutes the Indian film industry. The author has made a sincere attempt to portray the profile and contributions of these personalities in the book. A short description of the awardee, the films they were associated with, and illustrations make this book informative and interesting.



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